CHRISTIANITY AND THE MAN OF TO-DAY

GEORGE STANLEY FRAZER

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CHRISTIANITY AND THE MAN OF TO-DAY

Christianity and the Man of To-Day

By

GEORGE STANLEY FRAZER

With an Introduction by

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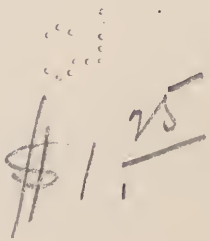

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no. 1.

To

My Wife

Whose Helpfulness and Companionship Have Contributed So Largely to Its Production, This Little Volume Is Affectionately Inscribed

FOREWORD

WHATEVER may be its other characteristics, ours is preëminently an era fraught with inquiry concerning religious standards. Perhaps never in its history has our Christian pulpit had so many problems to solve and questions to answer. But while there is a widespread inquiry concerning spiritual truth, there are also voices that are persistently calling men away from the inner life and the culture of the soul to those "practical" requirements whose tendencies are to stifle and deaden the high truths of faith. There is a "religion of success" that threatens to become the creed of our age and a sacred and absorbing conviction. One may discern in our modern life a tendency toward an education that seeks to know in order to get. Not only the Church, but the State and humanity are experiencing a blight that may be attributed to an overdone principle of the practical. Added to the countless other

perplexities is the confusion which has arisen from the discussion between faith and science, with the result that some have become bewildered in their thinking to the extent of believing that science is all knowledge and religion all credulity.

While criticisms on the irreligion of our time may be meaningless, since the same things have been said about other times, still it is only too evident that there is prevalent to-day a spiritual apathy that is exerting a baneful influence on the Church itself. Unfortunately, many critics have arisen whose unillumined thinking has caused many to turn away from the Church. To-day the most vigorous criticism is directed, not against Jesus Christ, but against the institution which bears his name. Much of the confusion, inside the Church and out, has arisen from a dogmatic interpretation of religious truth and from doctrinal skirmishes between exponents of various viewpoints. Many religious teachers have fallen into the way of addressing the life of the pres-

ent in the terms of an age gone by. Others are seeking to reach the masses by the adoption of the sensational and showy, an attempt to lift the world to a higher plane in the moral order by some ecclesiastical device. Still others are placing the emphasis on social service almost to the point of exalting sociology to a religion and "making up in organization what is lacking in inspiration."

But despite the assertion, so often made, that modern life is not concerned about the deep things of religion, there are some things that are clear. Religion is the most intimate and vital of all human concerns; and the religion of an age, as of an individual, must be judged by the state of its conscience. As Sabatier remarked, "man is incurably religious"; and the man of to-day is yearning for an interpretation of Christianity, genuine in its spirit and simple in its expression, that will indisputably attest that it is the Christianity of Christ, and whose beauty will be reflected in the lives of those who claim to be followers of the Man of

Galilee. The modern man is not asking for theories; he is seeking a living Christ who cannot be encompassed by theories and who towers above all dogma, and he is asking that this Christ be the central theme and fact in the Church and its message to the world.

While ours may be an era of transition, and for that reason an era of questioning, still nothing can be clearer than the fact that the principles of Jesus are permeating every sphere of our modern life; that his spirit is being enthroned in the marts of trade, in the world of politics, and, despite all signs to the contrary, in international relations. A new democracy is dawning in which material forces must inevitably yield to the spiritual. No matter how dark or forbidding the evils that encompass us, to one whose eyes are not holden Christianity, as the complete expression of true religion, is destined to project her beneficent ministry into succeeding ages to the destruction of every tyranny and the banishment of all unkindness.

If, as has been said, "the measure of a book

is in its appeal to the individual," it is sincerely hoped that this little volume may prove a cup of strength to those who are bewildered by the voices of the age with its whirling eddies. It is not presented with an idea that it possesses any special literary charm or that it offers any profound insight into the tangled maze of the problems of the day, but rather with the prayer that it may shed a ray of light on some of the dark enigmas of life, that it may prove to the troubled spirit an inspiration to "fight the good fight of faith," and that it may

"Be the sweet presence of a good diffuse
And in diffusion ever more intense."

GEORGE STANLEY FRAZER.

WASHINGTON, GEORGIA.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 15

CHAPTER I

Modern Values 19

CHAPTER II

The Church in Its Appeal to Modern Life. 54

CHAPTER III

What Modern Life Demands of Christianity 97

CHAPTER IV

The Conquering Vision 127

INTRODUCTION

THE present volume, though of measured compass, is worthy to be considered as one of the first fruits of the new literary and thought movement of which so much is prophesied and hoped in the Church and country. World suffering is turning mankind, more than ever before, to seek for the higher truth in which is healing and stay of intellectual life, while sudden and unlooked-for changes in the world order are sowing the seeds of seriousness in the soil heretofore turned by the plowshare of lightness. A mutuality of interest is also bringing into play a sympathy hitherto uninvoked in the history of mankind. It is the long-promised opportunity of the gospel. Its conjunctions of sentiment and possibility present such a theme for the pen of the writer prepared and inspired as has rarely before been offered. Out of the life of the times which are now taking shape is to come a literature unparalleled in the spirit of its earnestness and

the effectiveness of its message. We have the records of an Augustan, an Elizabethan, and a Victorian age; also of the awakenings in the times of Dante, of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and following the French Revolution. But we now hope for an age of humanity, an age whose life and thought movements are to be designated by no national name, nor limited save by the lines which describe the challenged and awakened sense of mankind. The crowning realization of that time is to be faith—a clearer, serener, surer faith in God and human life, and so a surer use of the divine revelation —and a more serious and soulful taking hold of life and its ever-multiplying opportunities.

"Christianity and the Man of To-Day" is a palate-exciting pledge of the fruitfulness of the age of religious thought, ministry, and literary teaching opening up before the young scholars and authors of our Church and country. But opportunity is always test; and the opportunity now at hand is a test to which must be brought the best we can produce, itself the output of

soul agony and desire, but it is a test in which the best will win.

This little volume has qualities of genuine literary merit and goes with a winsome and eloquent earnestness to the heart of the theme, the spiritual hunger and need of the man of to-day. It is not a technical presentation or recital of the moral and spiritual imperfections of the race. It is more and better; it is the discovery of the prodigal in the desert, a diagnosis of his soul sickness and the agony in his heart, and a pointing back to the plenty and soul rest to be found in the favor and fellowship of the Father. It is reassuring to find that the men who are to take the leadership of the future and to influence the life of the next generation are thinking the wholesome and elevated thoughts which are dominant in the discussions of this volume. We have had the privilege, as official editor, to conduct through the press during the past year and a half a number of inspiring treatises, and we are glad to be able to give to this a rank with the best.

HORACE M. DU BOSE.

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, April 14, 1917.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE MAN OF TO-DAY

Chapter I

MODERN VALUES

EVERY age has peculiarities characteristic of its spirit. One age will devote its efforts to the philosophical, the building of theologies, and the writing of poetry. Another age will be agnostic, busy about near-by things, and unwilling to trust itself to the larger and the deeper things of faith. This is characteristic of our age, noble and fruitful in many of its endeavors, but practical and fact-loving almost to the point of distrust. The result has been a tendency toward the impersonal, which has been carried to a paralyzing emphasis. A multitude of forces are conspiring to blur the edges of individuality and mold men into a common mass. Science has unveiled the incredible vastness of the universe, which has

created a loneliness in the human heart and overpowered man with a feeling of insignificance. Electricity and steam have made us a wandering people, and in the ceaseless movement of population the foundations of morality are in peril. The appalling migrations from the rural districts to the life of the city are causing vast populations to be swallowed up in the whirlpool of its seething life. Industrial and commercial forces are ceaselessly at work to obliterate the distinction of the individual. Men are crowded into factories and mills. Business men are forming themselves into corporations and syndicates, each man disappearing deeper and deeper into the ever-increasing bulk of the whole.

Moreover, our age is given to the accumulation of wealth, the scramble for power, and the quest of artificial pleasure. For years we have been kept busy clearing forests, plowing up prairies, building bridges, and in a variety of ways laying the foundations of national wealth and power. What a pursuit after the

trifles and trinkets of wealth! Every labor-saving device ought to give us more time for meditation, but it only increases our hurry. The fact that we are able to travel more rapidly ought to add to the leisure of life, but it adds to its pace. We all see and deplore the confusion—men rushing through life and never taking time to live; men hungering for that which is noble, but never finding time to be fed. No appeal, no argument avails; and, with all the boasts that we make of the victories of our age in science, we must remember that nothing is probably more dangerous for the human race than "science without poetry and culture without insight."

When we look into the mirror of fiction we find that our literature gives us little more than passing thoughts of things eternal. In hundreds of our modern productions there is an entire absence of any reference to religious faith, aims, or motives. To read them would be to feel that Christianity is dead, buried, and forgotten. The characters in many of these

books pass through great tribulations, sinning and suffering, driven through anguish to despair; yet they never pray, never think of God, and never imagine, apparently, that religion has any message for them. In the tangled maze of our modern life there are many who are enveloped in an atmosphere of quiet atheism.

Looking over this teeming world to-day, so full of tumult and so torn by terrible strife, one can see how racial rancor, greed, envy, and ambition have reaped their inevitable fruitage. With Nietzsche and Bernhardi boldly advocating a rationale of war, men have been led naturally to worship at the shrine of Force. Those who a few years ago prophesied the end of war have been living under a black cloud. There were those who said that the aëroplane looking down upon arsenals, fortresses, and cannons, and photographing fortifications had made spies unnecessary and forts ridiculous. Other enthusiasts said that the Marconigram would end war, in that it had

become impossible for any ship to escape capture. Then came the men whose hope was based upon commerce and the dependence of one nation upon another. But all of these dreams have come to nothing. It has been twenty-seven hundred years since the Hebrew prophets predicted the end of war, yet the nations are armed to the teeth. Nearly as long ago Plato dreamed of an ideal state, yet how far away it all seems! When all of the facts pass in review before our eyes, we are led to think in the words of Kipling:

We have done with Hope and Honor, we are lost to Love and Truth,
We are dropping down the ladder rung by rung;
And the measure of our torment is the measure of our youth—
God help us, for we knew the worst too young!

Many have pondered over these dark enigmas of our humanity until their eyes have been quenched in a gulf of deep despair. They can see no hopeful end to a chaotic world. And yet

in these raging tempests there may be a storm that will clear the air of pestilential vapors and hasten the coming of a better day. We need not accept war as the permanent and inevitable condition of society. For the time "Corsica may seem to have conquered Galilee," but that is only seeming.

In the meanwhile our Christian pulpit has many problems to confront. The voices of the age call men away from the inner life, and we are almost imperceptibly led to neglect the culture of the soul. Our life is obsessed by things external, by the glitter and the glamour of the surface of things. There are preachers who feel that they are a spiritual Atlas bearing the world upon their shoulders. They wear a troubled and despondent look, and much of their preaching seems to say:

"The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!"

With the din of the "practical" ringing in men's ears, we are likely to overlook that which is infinitely important, the task of sys-

tematic thinking about spiritual values. Ours has been called a practical age, and for that reason we are looking for results. We are measuring men to-day by the results which they can produce. The practical is not without its very distinct value, but the short-sightedness of an overdone principle of the practical in its relation to human values is apparent. Practical requirements may be carried to the extent of stifling and deadening the highest and best things in our human nature. The real value of the practical lies in that which administers to the highest and finest expressions of personal life. For this reason we do well to look carefully into that type of education that measures its efficiency in terms of "the earning capacity of the boy during the first ten years after graduation" and produces a type of ministry guaranteed to "deliver the goods."

No one wishes to undervalue the efficacy of the practical in dealing with the problems of our time, but who cannot see the impoverish-

ment of the highest and best in human nature as a consequence of the rule of the practical in the great ideals of life? Where is this more apparent than in our modern estimates of success? An Italian historian has written an article on "The Religion of Success," which, he contends, is fast becoming the creed of our age and an absorbing and sacred conviction. Success is a sufficient answer to every objection. We are willing to forgive anything but failure and equally ready to pardon anything that wins. No wonder we dance about an image of the golden calf! When society loses its great faiths and idealisms by which it has been led in pursuit of the highest, we need not wonder that life degenerates into a feverish scramble, bereft of dignity, nobility, and repose.

The crafty suggestions of ambition were never more alluring than they are to-day, guaranteeing the largest returns through compromise and expediency. To the statesman it whispers: "We must be practical; we must take men as they are. This is not an ideal

world; the pure gold of truth must be alloyed with a bit of falsehood to make it workable." To many an ambitious man Satan whispers: "This material world is my kingdom, and heaven is God's kingdom. If you will recognize me in a practical way on earth, I will recognize you through your ideals as to heaven. We must get together, for remember there must be compromise if there is to be success." The entire philosophy of compromise and expediency can be summed up thus: Add God and the devil together and divide by two, and you have a practical, working philosophy which will mean success and honor. The emissaries of compromise exclaim with equal emphasis: "Good Lord, good devil!" The old philosophy taught that there were two gods, a god of virtue and a god of evil; but there is no room for two gods in the universe of the soul.

Every man ought to rejoice in any form of useful enterprise, but no success can be said to be real when it is secured by the injury or

destruction of the soul; and because so much of what is called success is achieved at such frightful sacrifice of what is finest in men, it is not success at all, but rather tragic, dismal failure. Every day we see men bartering their very souls, cheating themselves out of their birthright, and the paltry success which they gain is out of all proportion to the price. "Born a man and died a grocer" would be a truthful summing up of many a life story. The life work of every man ought to be a divine school of discipline in which his capacities are developed and his powers increased. But if this school proves to be a prison, and, instead of the individual's becoming the master of all its problems, it gains the mastery over him, there inevitably follows that destruction of spiritual liberty whereby men are enabled to prove victorious in the trials which beset our mortal lot.

Before men become engrossed in their pursuits to the extent of devoting their exclusive affections to them, they should take to heart

those famous words of Darwin, who, though accounted a glittering success by many, has left us in these words the picture of an inward tragedy of soul:

Up to the age of thirty or beyond it, poetry of many kinds, such as the works of Milton, Gray, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, gave me great pleasure, and even as a schoolboy I took intense delight in Shakespeare. . . . Pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry. I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music. . . . I retain some taste for fine scenery, but it does not cause me the exquisite delight which it formerly did. . . . My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts. . . . If I had to live my life again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week, for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would have been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.

How different the life of James Smetham, who, though accounted by many a failure, has left us in his "Letters" the history of a successful soul! The great question that came to Smetham was: "How shall I order and direct my life? What shall I aim at?" He felt that to give himself entirely to painting would be to lose the mental and moral culture which he needed; so through long years he combined the culture of art, literature, and the religious life all in one. Though many looked on him as a painter who had failed, he was able to say:

> I am looking on myself as one who has got on—as one who, if he had chosen, could have had a competence, if not a fortune, but has got something a thousand times better, more real, more inward, less in the power of others, less variable, more eternal. I could scarcely wish to realize more on earth of an earthly kind. All I wish is to increase the knowledge of God and the sense of repose in him as King and Father through his Son and Mediator.

Looking back over his life, he could say: "If all were to do over again, I would do just the same. I would not have it otherwise."

Surely this was the largest success, and thus to view life in all of its victorious triumphs over earthly allurements is infinitely more sublime than any tinseled prize this world can give. Smetham invested life with a unique grandeur because he glorified life in the pursuit of a high and noble purpose. Never denying his dream, never betraying his hope, never wavering from his ideal, he pursued to the end the heaven-born aim with a step that never halted and a nerve that never faltered. From youth to age, in poverty and in plenty, in sickness and in health, he was ever led on by that flame enkindled in the morning of youth.

In an age when men are measuring success in terms within the power of numbers to compute, unceasingly and with every art at our command, we must hold up before the eyes of the youth of this generation the reality, the divinity, the surpassing glory of the moral ideal. We must hold before them that light that never was on land or sea and impress upon them the truth that the only success

worth while amidst the besieging vanities of life is the success that lies in the path of fidelity to the moral ideal.

"In spite of the stare of the wise
And the world's derision,
Dare travel the star-blazed road,
Dare follow the vision."

With the ideal of materialism and force coloring the life of the day, it seems that there never was a time when there were so few who know how to be quiet and listen to the great voices that speak to us. Our education is directed not so much toward the development of that which is noblest in life, but rather to enable youth to get things quickly. Even much of our science seeks to know in order to get. When we think of the more than seventeen million children in the common schools of our country and of the millions of youth in the other institutions of our nation, we are moved to deep pondering as we listen to their footfall. These are to be the future guardians of the history and traditions of this republic. What

ideals will animate them as they are intrusted with the affairs of humanity? Their administration of that which has been bought at such sacrifice and which is so vital to the life of the future will depend upon the faith and the vision by which they are now being led.

What a wail of lamentation is uttered at the sight of thousands of young men turning from the learned professions to enter the arena of trade and commerce! In his Yale address President White spoke of materialism as "an evil spirit that has given its cup of sorcery to youth and beguiled them from the paths of noble scholarship and the intellectual life." There are many who believe that never again shall we see the like of Longfellow or Whittier, Bancroft or Prescott, Beecher or Brooks, because we are forgetting the fact that money is for life and not life for money. No man can realize the benign power in wealth until he sees the forces stored up in money liberated and employed for the enrichment of life. When men are blinded by a coarse and grovel-

ing greed, they inevitably lose sight of life at the point where it is most worth seeing—that unpurchasable, imperishable beauty that gives to life its real value. And just here we are made to feel the treacherous falseness of the material estimate of life. In no way is this more easily recognized than when a man is estimated by his worth in money. Dr. Van Dyke gives an account of a banquet where "two great railroads and the major part of the sugar and oil in the United States sat down with three gold mines and a line of steamships. 'How much is that man worth?' asks the curious inquirer. 'That man,' answers some walking business directory, 'is worth a million dollars; and the man sitting next to him is not worth a penny.'" A most natural answer for one who judges everything by the money standard. "How much, then, is a man better than a sheep" if wealth is the measure of value and the end of life the acquisition of riches? There are men who put a price on everything —honor, love, virtue, heaven. And in this

lies the tragedy of materialism; it is the tragedy of low and shallow ideals.

Need we wonder at the pitiful penury of faith in our day, our dearth of vision, and our nervous fret and worry and fear when we consider the influence of the materialistic ideal on our religious impulses? How many men lack proportion because of a poverty of soul occasioned by neglect? Too many men allow their impulse after something higher and more ennobling to end with a mere wish or an occasional vagrant desire. Here is a business man who, feeling a need in commercial affairs, does not stop until he has mastered the ways and means whereby what he desires may be obtained. Yet in the higher and more important concerns of life which involve his wealth of soul, his peace of mind, and his influence for good he leaves all to chance. He sees unmistakably the lack of wisdom of which he is guilty, still he continues in his course day in and day out. Yet more tragic and pathetic is the picture of a man of power, hardened, like

Silas Marner, by selfish greed, and who thinks of the Church as a kind of "divine police force to hold the masses in check" while he plunders. Such is the picture of Eldon Parr portrayed in "The Inside of the Cup," by Churchill. Here is a man who lives by the law of the jungle six days in the week and tries to make up for it by worship and charity on the seventh. He looks on business as one thing and religion as another. He cannot see that religion and everyday life must be one or that both are futile. He thinks that to support his Church furnishes him with a license to loot. Nor is the character far overdrawn, for when we come to look about us we discover that it is altogether too real. Such is the inevitable fruitage of appraising life in dollars and cents.

Not only religion and the Church, but the State and humanity have felt the frightful blight of materialism. Instead of thinking in terms of humanity, men have been thinking in the dialect of nation, creed, and party; and this has done much toward preventing the light of

good will from shining in its beauty upon this passion-clouded earth. We need not look for any permanent betterment until there is a transvaluation of patriotism from a tribal loyalty to a universal allegiance—until out of the deepening sense of human solidarity there springs up a world patriotism large of vision and benign of spirit. And when this larger vision proclaims its universal sovereignty we shall have done with the arrogant war lord, deceitful diplomacies, and the merciless appeal to brute force.

When we are willing to admit the truth, we shall find that we have been trying to accomplish an impossible task. We have been trying to build a Christian civilization on a pagan foundation; we have been endeavoring to establish a social order upon a brutal basis. Such is manifestly absurd. Greece learned the truth at a frightful cost when she built her structure of art and life upon a basis of inhumanity to man, which resulted in her decline and fall. And just so shall we fall if we at-

tempt to rear our civilization upon any basis but that which befits the worth of humanity. The human order that will be permanently established is that which takes into account God's immutable law of moral gravitation. That man shows himself a true idealist and a real philosopher who is not awed by pompous splendor and who does not worship bigness. The glory of a nation cannot be measured by extent of territory or vastness of wealth.

What, then, is the real value of life, and in what does it consist? Is it to be found in place, or fame, or wealth? Not at all. It is not wealth that makes a man, nor poverty that unmakes him. The real worth of life is to be found, not in the things a man has or does not have, but in what he is. We need to revalue our values in the light of His star who placed the things of the soul above all else to be prized. We need to study nature and nature's God, as did Robert Burns, that we may see beauty in "the fold of clouds, in the slant of trees, in the glint of flowing waters, in the

mists trailing over the hills, that our minds may be wrapped in a kind of enthusiasm for Him who, in the language of the Hebrew bard, 'walks on the wings of the wind.' "

Perhaps nothing in our day has bred such innumerable errors and countless perplexities as the confusion which has arisen from the discussion between faith and science. Nothing can be more amusing than the credulity with which men swallow anything wearing the name and label of science. Let a man put forth any kind of dogma and call it scientific, and it will be accepted by many as indisputable truth. Some have gone to the length of believing that science is all knowledge and religion all faith. And it is not to be wondered that contentions have arisen when such a book as "Varieties of Religious Experience," by William James, is allowed to pass for a scientific study of religious experience. One would think that the author was writing "a thesis on the pathology of religion," dealing almost entirely with what might seem to be its excesses and eccentricities.

He seems to lose sight of that deep stream of faith and vision which has been flowing on down the ages and making fruitful that which was barren and desolate.

It is manifestly absurd to assume the defensive attitude toward science, as though we were afraid of fact; for when we come to understand them we find that science and religion both rest upon the same fundamental basis of faith, and both attest, each in its own manner, the kinship of man with God. Still religion is well within her rights when she brings to task that type of scientist who would translate all forces and qualities back into material terms, who looks on the soul of man as nothing more than the effervescence of matter and places the fungus of the field on a parity with the genius that lies within man. There is something in the nature of man that is at eternal enmity with any theory that appraises in like value the sap of the tree and the spirit of the saint, because unconscious matter has no relevancy against the spiritual order.

Nor is man to stand abashed in the presence of that bewildering contrast of his apparent littleness and the overwhelming vastness of the physical universe. Lord Kelvin has given us a hint of the incredible riches of the star-filled heaven, with its thousand million suns and planets. In comparison with this measureless expanse of space our earth is but a pin point. As one astronomer has put it: "If God dispatched one of his angels to discover this tiny planet amongst the glittering hosts of his stars, it would be like sending a child out on some vast prairie to find a speck of sand at the root of some blade of grass." What, then, is man, with his petty cares and fleeting life? Pascal says:

> Man is but a reed, the most feeble thing in nature; but he is a thinking reed. It is not necessary that the whole universe should arm itself to crush him. A vapor, a drop of water suffices to kill him. But though the universe should crush him, man would still be more noble than that which kills him, because he knows that he dies and the advantage which the universe has over him.

The universe is unconscious of its own vastness. It is, and will always be, a mass of brute, unintelligent matter. It never felt the touch of its Creator's hand, and we may be very sure that in the scale of God's judgments its vastness has no value against a spiritual order. God is a Spirit, and spiritual values with him must be supreme.

Science is rapidly coming to see that its method does not exhaust the universe and that, as an eminent scientist has recently said, "If we dogmatize in a negative direction and say that we can reduce everything to physics and chemistry, we gibbet ourselves as ludicrously narrow pedants and are falling far short of the richness and fullness of our human birthright." God cannot be discovered by analysis, neither can he be understood by argument. He will not be found by exploration of the universe nor by mere investigation of cold facts. Said one: "I have searched the heavens for years and have not found God." His failure was not surprising, neither was

any sane man disappointed. We do not test friendship by the stethoscope, nor God by telescope or microscope. We cannot know man by dissecting him; we know him by some quality that is higher and nobler than physical analysis. We may examine his brain, his sinews, his bones, his arteries, and fail to find the touch of his genius or the force of his love. From a scientific standpoint, we may fail in tracing the movements of his inward life; but still we shall know him through that mysterious and inexplicable communion that exists between our souls.

No experiment in apologetics can suffice to satisfy mere scientific curiosity. As Dr. Fitchett has expressed it: "You cannot catch your thief and inject Christian principles into him with a hypodermic syringe as you inject drugs. You cannot inoculate a harlot at will and with a lancet. Christianity can only be applied under its own conditions and laws, and these conditions are personal to the subject." Spiritual knowledge is very different from mere intellec-

tual apprehension—not only different, but deeper. We attain to the knowledge of a fact mentally by examination, by comparison, by the process of analyzing and defining it; but we can know a thing spiritually only by becoming like it. We may know the theory and the philosophy of music, but we cannot know music until our souls respond to the appeal of its enchanting melody. One of the sad defects of our age lies in the fact that too many men do their thinking in the light of what they find in the subhuman world and the methods employed in its study. In a hot debate Huxley told his opponent to dissect a cockroach and learn the truth. But this is not the only road to truth, for the soul of man is far more valuable than the anatomy of a dead cockroach. We cannot learn below man all that we need to know for the interpretation of the life of man. What cannot be found in the subhuman world does not exist for many men, because they fail to take into account the fact that the laws of the soul are as authentic, as reliable, as uniform as

anything which can be found in the study of nonhuman life.

Still it is encouraging to note the reverent attitude with which the scientist of to-day is dealing with the spiritual element in life and how far science has journeyed since Huxley. This may be seen from the words of Sir Oliver Lodge in his address as President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science:

> Genuine religion has its roots deep down in the heart of humanity and the reality of things. It is not surprising that by our methods we fail to grasp it. There is a principle of relativity here; and we are deaf and blind, therefore, to the immanent grandeur around us unless we have insight enough to recognize in the woven fabric of existence, flowing steadily from the loom of an infinite progress toward perfection, the ever-growing garment of a transcendent God.

This betokens a new method of dealing with old problems and the coming of a new type of mind, a kind of scientific spirituality which studies the truths of faith with the care and

caution of science while keeping the warmth and glow and power of faith. As for our part, we must live with open minds, welcoming every ray of light, knowing that all truth confirms a true faith and that he who seeks the truth is obeying a noble impulse. We want nothing but the truth, and our house of faith must be builded upon the rock of reality to insure permanency. When we have a reverent, God-fearing science and a type of religion noble enough to take the last-found fact of science and read its meaning in the light of God, then we shall realize something of the privilege that springs from freedom of the truth, and our futile disputations shall come to an end.

Amid the confusions which are springing up all about us, it is well for us to remember the famous saying of Pascal, "The heart has its reasons, which the reason knoweth not," and that the mighty truths that make us men are the most authentic notes that echo through our mortal years. There is something within us that is deeper and broader than mathematical

calculation, and in the higher matters of life the appeal must be to the largest and noblest reason. No man can study religion who does not bring a human heart with him to the great investigation. There is one temple into which we may enter and meet with the great Invisible; and, meeting with him, we shall hear the music of the universe. That temple is the temple of love. Happy is the man who has an ear to hear and a heart to understand and who attunes his life to its majestic and swelling music.

No one wishes to underrate the efficiency of our age in its material advancement and scientific achievement; but we cannot deny what is too apparent, that our ostentation has led to a forgetting of the truth that human well-being lies in the pursuit of righteousness and brotherly love. We have been mistaking mere brilliance for idealism, and the result has been an invasion of a host of haunting ills and a letting down of the high, heroic faith that makes us men. It is nothing more nor less than the old

rot of prosperity that has caused men to leave the rich treasures of Christian thought and experience and become the dupes of strange and vacillating fads.

This view is not confined to the pulpit, for only recently the editor of a clever comic journal marked for a target the folly of mistaking "success in life for success in living." That eagerness that is apparent in so many men to prefer commercial wealth to richness of soul he deems as a kind of insanity. That which is so conspicuous for its absence in our modern life is the "spiritual quality," of which he says:

> What is the spiritual quality? Let us call it a grasp of certain great truths, the knowledge of which is revealed to some babes and denied to some learned, which comes more by conduct than by study, and more perhaps by breeding and the grace of God than either. Able men lacking or losing this quality cease to be able to inspire and fail of leadership.

This is indicative of the dearth of great leadership in Church and State to-day, to say nothing of the absence of genius in the field of

literature. We may readily admit that the statesman of the past was not as shrewd as his successor of to-day, but he had in a rare degree the spiritual quality. "We are all inspired," said Fénelon, "but our mode of life stifles it"; and the tragedy lies in the fact that we value our mode of life more than the inspired vision.

For men to ignore religion is to ignore the rich inheritance which is already theirs, irrespective of their will. Just as well a banker deny his indebtedness to the accumulation of capital and credit which has been gathering through the years. He may attribute his fortune to his ability or sagacity; but, unaided by the possession of this capital and credit, his ability could not have achieved success. Though it is not within our power to calculate the influence of religion on the history of the race, still the moral capital of the world has been piled up largely through religious forces; and this fact should be remembered by those who have become critical toward the Church.

Of course there are many defects in the Church to-day, as there have always been. We want better preaching, with more insight; better teaching, more personal and more practical. We want more power of influence, more sympathy with people, that we may have a better insight into social problems. All of these we want and need; but all these will come in abundance when the greatest need has been realized—a deeper life of faith and prayer, the life of God in the souls of men.

And this culture of the soul can come only through a life of prayer and praise. The fact is that we do not take time to listen to those great and silent voices that would speak to us. To listen is the best part of prayer, and there can be no virtue in an idle, listless prayer. No one would venture into the presence of a great man with careless, distracted thought seeking audience, and yet we walk aimlessly into the awful silence where whisper those voices which tell us what life is. We cannot afford to delegate that which is most important in life, the

issues of life and death, altogether to the pulpit; for, as John Ruskin put it,

> Precious indeed those thirty minutes by which the teacher tries to get at the separate hearts of a thousand men, to convince them of all their weaknesses, to shame them for all their sin, to warn them of all their dangers, to try by this way and that to stir the hard fastenings of the doors where the Master himself has stood and knocked, yet none opened, and to call at the openings of those dark streets where wisdom herself hath stretched forth her hands and no man regarded. Thirty minutes to raise the dead in!

The part of wisdom amid the fleeting days of this mortal life is for a man to strip himself of all pretense, selfishness, sensuality, and sluggishness of soul and go into silence to learn the great facts of life. Such are the moments that mean everything; for then voices speak that cannot be heard in the hurry and jam of the crowd, where heart treads on heart. Then may we

> ". . . seek within
> A life that shall never die,
> Some haven to win
> From mortality."

Life involves more than material gain. It involves more than an intellectual comprehension of the intricate problems of mankind. It involves beauty and culture and duty. It involves our relation with that which is unseen and the harmony of our spirit with the unseen Spirit. We can get along with a great many intellectual inconsistencies in our lives. We may not be able to comprehend faith and science in all of their depths; there may be a discord in our intellectual faculties; but a lack of harmony between our moral and spiritual sentiments we cannot endure. Men may deny the strange sovereignty of Jesus over the soul, they may order their lives in ways which he does not approve, but they do so with a haunting sense of moral uneasiness. They may continue as though they were at peace; but they know that it is a sham, and they do not have to be told that they are acting a hard part with poor success. They may even deny the fact that Jesus Christ ever lived; but somehow when they think of him they are

moved to wistfulness at thought of what life may be when lived in his presence, and in the innermost depths of their souls they experience a longing to know what Whittier felt when he wrote:

> Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
> And tossed by storm and flood,
> To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
> I know that God is good!

Chapter II

THE CHURCH IN ITS APPEAL TO MODERN LIFE

WHILE every age has witnessed influences that have been hostile to the Church, perhaps never before has organized Christianity had to contend with force so subtly aggressive as to-day. Under the constant fire of criticism that has been directed against the Church, a vast literature of complaint has accumulated. It has been alleged that the Church is afraid to test its faith in the strong light of reason, that it dare not face the intellect of the age. Some contend that the pulpit lacks intellectual stimulus and prophetic fire; and, like ecclesiastical hirelings, the ministry is directing its attention to the rich while forgetting the poor and lowly.

Baron von Hugel pictures the masses in full flight away from the Church and finds the reason in the fact that the spiritual life of the

Church has been paralyzed by those who have sought to make and keep the Church great instead of holy and useful. And while the Church cannot longer say, "Silver and gold have I none," he notes the decline of that inner power by which the paralytic could be made to arise and walk. He conceives of the pathfinder being crushed by the machine and the deep spirituality degenerating into a political color where "sociology dethrones theology and agitation supplants evangelization."

To many inside the Church and out, the Church is to be ignored or looked upon as an obstacle to progress. They have a habit of looking backward when there existed a real need for the Church; but to-day its creeds are all outgrown, its methods antiquated, and its power on the wane. Many who are loyal to the Church are plunged in a gulf of dark despair. When they compare the things of to-day with those of yesterday, they are unable to see any hopeful issue to a chaotic condition. They look into the past and see the pulpits

filled with giants; they look about them and see nothing but dwarfs.

When we think of the multiplication of organizations engaged in ethical and philanthropic work, it is not to be wondered that the Church fails to loom so distinctively conspicuous in the minds of some as in other days. While no effort that looks to the alleviation of distress or the development of the social order ought to be condemned, it is chiefly on account of the host of religious and semireligious bodies that the Church does not tower so splendidly impressive as in former times. Going back to other days, we see the preacher as the intellectual and spiritual guide of his people; but today, when the schoolmaster, the journalist, the novelist, and many others have acquired a share in the teaching function, the preacher has been relegated to his particular sphere. A new world viewpoint is in the minds of men; and all the fundamental institutions of humanity—the family, the State, and the Church—have been cast into the crucible and are being tried

by fire. There are voices denouncing the family as a fountain teeming with plagues and curses, condemning the State as an instrument of injustice and oppression, all to be thrown as rubbish upon the "scrap heap" of worn-out institutions. Is it any wonder, in an age so radical in its condemnation, so unfair in its prejudices, that the Church should come in for its share of rebuke and criticism? To-day the most vigorous and plausible criticism is directed, not against Jesus Christ, but against an institution which bears his name.

Suppose we should admit all criticisms against the Church. Where rests the blame? The Church is just what the people make it, possessing no sanctity save that which comes through its service to the soul. The Church is not an abstract, omnipotent thing, but rather a company made up of common men and women who live, toil, suffer, and die; "a society not of saints, but of seekers after goodness." No doubt the Church has its faults, but these are the faults of our humanity. It holds its treas-

ures in earthen vessels. No man can justify the washing of his hands in aloofness. It is his Church just as it is his country and his civilization; and if he loves his race, he will be loyal to it. The testimony of the atheist and the cynic is of no value in their reproach of the Church. To quote the words of Burke: "If our religious tenets should ever want a further elucidation, we shall not call on atheism to explain them. We shall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire." Among many debts that we owe to Aristotle is the fact that, having no religion, he attempted no book about religion. This is what Carlyle objected to in Voltaire, and this is a just and valid criticism of all unillumined thinking about religion and of all fault-finding by those whose hearts are foreign to the welfare of the Church.

Still it cannot be denied that much of the criticism against the Church and our conception of religious truth has arisen from dogmatic methods of interpreting religion and

from doctrinal skirmishes and accusations between exponents of various viewpoints. The result has been confusion even in the Church itself, and we are brought face to face with the spectacle of the membership of the Church rallying about the standards of the "new" or the "old," with but a faint idea of the real issue involved. In the light of these exasperating contentions, the conviction is made stronger that the task of Christian thinking is to learn the Christian gospel of the spiritual life in its supreme revelation—in Jesus Christ and in all experience and history as the context of Jesus and his gospel. In this we can learn much from the old Quakers, for they had in a rare degree the true insight. They never argued; they were never critics. They realized that the high truths of faith do not hang their pictures in "the cold, gray light of what we are pleased to call reason." Christianity is the monopoly of no Church and no creed, whatever may be the ecclesiastical name. We need to put away all strife,

that in all the departments of the holy catholic Church we may find those who have dared to follow the star-led vision—those who have felt the touch of the Spirit of the Christ and in the forms natural to their day and place are striving to realize the ends for which he laid down his life.

The pulpit is engaged in a futile task when it addresses the life of the present in the terms of a time gone by. Many recall a time when questions of faith and doctrine were topics of fireside conversation. But that time has gone, perhaps never to return. The average man of to-day is engaged in what some term "a pursuit of the practical," and for this reason he is oddly silent where his fathers were loudly talkative. Some have grown indifferent, but others are dumb because they do not know what to say. In this change that has taken place in our way of thinking of life we are losing some things that we can ill afford to lose, but we are ridding ourselves of certain

theological encumbrances that have no value in dealing with the essential things of life.

Why should we bemoan the passing of those Puritanic conceptions of life, taken from those who were less followers of Christ than saints of the old economy, bound by censorious rules of appalling rigidity? To them life was a shadow and joy a sin. They turned a day which should have been a joyous festival of faith into a horror of artificial sanctimoniousness. In "Little Dorrit" Dickens describes those dull Sundays when the laughter of life died away and the home was enveloped in a shadow that fell over it like a pall:

> The sleepy Sunday of his boyhood when, like a military deserter, he was marched to chapel, morally handcuffed to another boy; and when he would willingly have bartered two meals of indigestible sermon for another ounce of mutton at his scanty dinner in the flesh. There was the interminable Sunday of his nonage when his mother, stern of face, would sit all day behind a Bible—bound, like her own construction of it, in the hardest, barest, and straightest boards, with a sprinkling of wrath-

ful red upon the edges of the leaves—as if it, of all books, were a fortification against sweetness of temper and natural affection. Then there was the resentful Sunday of a little later, when he sat with a sullen sense of injury in his heart and no more real knowledge of the beneficent history of the New Testament than if he had been bred among idolaters.

Who would call back those theological conceptions that found expression in such pungent sermons as "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," by Jonathan Edwards, and which made the chief concern of religion an escape from the horrors of hell? Can we conceive of the life of faith and prayer and vision falling into a sadder perversion? No wonder Santa Teresa prayed for a cup of water in one hand and a flame of fire in the other, that with the one she might quench the fires of hell and with the other burn up the glories of heaven, that men might learn to love God for his loveliness and to do right for the sake of right. Against such prostitution of religion into a scramble for safety

men will never cease to protest, and rightfully so. While it is true that every religious conception has its place in the gradually unfolding process of religious truth, we parade ourselves as narrow dogmatists when we claim for these ideas the place of finality. The crusade that began when Bernard of Clairvaux preached from the hilltop at Vezelia and there arose from the surging sea of humanity the shout, "Crosses, crosses!" was not without its distinct contribution; but it was only a link in the chain. Daniel Rowlands made his pulpit a smoking and thundering Sinai, but not until he learned to preach the sovereign grace of God did the eighteenth-century revival in Wales work its wonder.

He knows little of history who undervalues the resources of the past and their contribution to the life of the present. Nor do we wish to be guilty of that ingratitude expressed in the line of Lowell: "Thoughts that great hearts broke for, we breathe cheaply in the common air." But we greatly limit

the scope of religious expression when we seek the credentials and assurances of the divine only in the life of the past. Just as the faith of the past found its spiritual verities in terms that it knew, so must we seek in the forms of the life of to-day the assurance of God. The virility of all religion is to be found in the degree of its application to the ideals and conditions of its times; and just as God spoke convincingly to a past civilization in terms congenial to that age, so will he speak to us in terms of our ruling convictions. No fact is more indicative of the penury of our faith than the alertness with which we seek the evidences of the supernatural expressed in miraculous deeds, occurrences, and experiences, pointing to these as the supreme credentials of the divine. We demand visible proofs (which are nonspiritual) of spiritual reality. The supernatural, in the demonstration of divine power in the human realm, is not to be discounted; but equally important is the demonstration of the presence of God and the sa-

credness of life in terms of to-day's life. The deepest convictions of life are taking form in righteousness, law, and service; and in these we must find the evidences of the supernatural, realizing that even in the commonplace the Infinite touches our finite life. Unless we can convincingly show God at work in the life of to-day, no volume of "supernatural evidences" out of the past can create religious reality.

Men of to-day are asking for living bread, not crumbs swept up from the past; they are seeking a vital, energizing faith, not a tradition. In his "Divinity School Address" Emerson made a plea for the reality and freshness of faith:

> The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a religion of revelation to us, not the history of theirs? The sun shines to-day also. There is more wool and flax in the fields.

Instead of the abstract terms of the older

theology, drawn from metaphysics or logic or law, men are seeking a more concrete, a more personal expression of Christianity. We must not forget that God has done great things for our fathers and that "the good old days" were very real, but we must also cherish the faith that God still speaks and promises large things to us. For this we need statements written out of a genuine sympathy with the past and an intelligent understanding of its contribution to Christian progress, but also with a clear understanding of the distinctive needs of our own day and of the special answer of Christ to those needs. This calls for insight and foresight. Our Lord's atonement is not simply "a finished work"; it is the divine fire of self-sacrifice which ever renews itself. His life is not a mere memory, but a perennial ideal at whose shrine the pilgrim hopes to realize all the beauty of his dreams.

In the study of the progress of Christian thought we readily see that each age has formulated its own version of the truths of Chris-

tianity in terms of its own life and thought; and since men can speak only such language as they know, it could not be otherwise. Thus the great creeds were primarily confessions of faith that tried to find intellectual expression in the terms of the age in which they were written. The crudest dogmas, bolstered by far-fetched arguments, were simply strivings to give intellectual shape to the same ineffable truth which we feel to-day. At the heart of every great dogma lies a rich and a profound spiritual insight, but the Church in its appeal to modern life must be able to distinguish carefully the faith from the mere forms employed and translate this faith into terms of our own time. Because theologies change, each presenting new picture conceptions of spiritual truth, we should be careful as to how they are to be made the tests of fellowship. It is one thing to seek to formulate truth, but it is an entirely different thing to strive for finality, because, as Flaubert says, "The greatest genius never concludes; God alone may do

that." The Church cannot afford to fall into the way of the dogmatist who poses as a final authority for the truth and seeks to limit the operation of the truth to the system which formulates it. No scholastic doctrines fashioned after the manner of algebraic formulas are sufficient for the understanding of the Christian way of life. There is no monopoly of truth; and its genuineness is irreproachable, although the stamp of the dogmatist may not be imprinted upon it. When we come to think about it, we find that much of our sectarianism is as much psychological as it is theological, standing for different types of mind. The great councils of the Church have been archtypes of the predominant influence of some towering intellect like Athanasius at Nicæa; and if a great gulf seems fixed between the contending ideas of devout souls like Emerson and Pascal, we may remember that our theological systems have been as much the result of temperament as of reason.

The fallacy of the effort toward absolute

interpretation of religious truth is clearly discerned in the injury that has been wrought by making the experience possible to one type of mind the standard of religious life. One might as well contend that those who are temperamentally incapable of such an experience have no religion at all. The life of Christ in the souls of men reveals itself in varying forms through differing minds, and his appeal is broad enough to include life in all of its diversity of temperament. When we read the Epistle of James we see Jesus as the way to God because of the virility of his gospel. When we turn to the Epistles of Paul we find the central, creative note in his thinking to be the cross; and in comparison with the overwhelming fact of his vicarious death the remaining facts of the life of Christ seem incidental. Again, when we open the Gospel of John, Christ presents himself as the eternal Reason wearing the form of man, the creative Word made flesh. No one would contend that any of these visions is untrue, yet no single one

presents the whole truth as it is in Jesus. The reality of Christ is too deep to be measured by any single estimate. His life is a diamond which reflects a myriad of lights, and its supernal rays light up different chambers in the temple of the soul. No one teacher has fathomed the boundless riches of truth in Christ; no single theology has ever exhausted it.

"Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be.
They are but broken lights of thee;
And thou, O Lord, art more than they."

To John Newton, who, according to his epitaph, which he wrote himself, was "once an infidel and libertine, a servant of slaves in Africa," Christ presented himself as the Saviour and Cleanser of the souls of men. Following him through a wayward youth, habit-stained and morally broken, we witness his struggle to break the cords of sensuality that bound him. Naturally his experience, as did the experience of St. Augustine, colored all his thinking; and yet that experience, so rich

and beautiful, does not exhaust the redeeming reality of Christ. To Browning, as to Clement of Alexandria, a scholar nurtured in Greek philosophy and literature, Christ was the solution of the dark enigmas that haunt the intellect and the light that illumines the avenues to truth. To Phillips Brooks the life of Jesus was the sovereign beauty of the world, while to Wesley it was a burning white light that reanimated the decaying life of a cold formalism. To many humble souls who dwell amidst the commonplace things of life and whose hours are spent in the drudgery of toil, Jesus appears in "the practice of the presence of Christ." And so all along the dusty highway are pilgrims; and in each one there is a new wonder, a unique greatness, and an unspeakable beauty —in each a truth of Christ, yet always the same reality taking myriad forms. One man is practical and builds his faith on the Sermon on the Mount; another is speculative and comes to Christ through far-reaching ideas; while

yet another enters into the vast mystery by meditation and prayer.

Though conversion takes many forms and expresses itself in a variety of ways, it is a fact as true as any reality of life. Whenever and wherever man comes into the recognition of his soul and turns from the carnal to the spiritual, he is led by the same divine Spirit. The man of India who renounces an inheritance and betakes himself to the forest to feel after God is moved by that same power that arrested Saul of Tarsus on his journey to Damascus, and his transformation is no less wonderful. When we read the autobiography of Stuart Mill, we find that his conversion began with an intellectual basis. His father had taught him to be an atheist, but his deeper nature cried out for a deeper truth. Life seemed hardly worth the living as he followed the unprofitable paths of negation, and the question that continually presented itself was: "What if all my objects in life were realized? Would this be happiness?" At last he was

saved from despair by reading the poetry of Wordsworth, and the voice of the poet speaking from the depths stirred the soul of Mill and gave him an insight into the real meaning of life and satisfied the hunger of a heart long starved on the husks of denial. There can be no fixed method or form of conversion. The life of the Spirit in the souls of men is wrought in many ways. The eternal Fisher of men is wise and skillful, using a variety of means to bring wayward souls to himself. Through the ministry of a dream John Woolman was born anew. In his dream he thought he was dead, but later he came to understand that it was the old Woolman who was dead and that a new man had been brought to life through the mercy of God. Louisa Alcott "ran over the hills at dawn one summer morning and paused to rest. Through an arch of trees she saw the sun rise, and with it there arose a new life in her which sustained her heroic soul through years of sad vicissitude. That sun had been rising for ages, but she saw it in a dross-

drained moment." There are many gates leading into the temple of the heart. The divine Spirit is near to every soul; and it matters not how God finds, if so be that he does find us, then the commonplace things of life are invested with a hallowed charm.

One of the sad defects of our age is the dearth of that vision by which we are able to discern the transformation in the life of the individual, seeking to limit the expression of the spirit to a particular form, circumscribing the divine influence by our own perversions. Some have resorted to the preparation of statistics to show that little change in the life of an individual may be expected after the passing of the fluid years of youth, seeking to follow the ways of the Spirit with pencil and notebook. These would place the greatest emphasis on those appeals to the period of adolescence, when youth is susceptible to the call to a higher life. All such appeals are noble in their purpose, but we greatly blunder when we limit our efforts to one period in life and give

rise to the impression that the gates are closed for those who have passed a certain stage in life's course. The same appeal does not reach men at all periods of life; and even though the mature man may not be stirred by the emotional, we need not infer that the inner light has been entirely extinguished. Amidst the confusions and perplexities of life men are yearning for an insight into the tangled maze of things, and they are praying for strength and courage to wage the battles of life. God works in a mysterious way, and men are being moved deeply and quietly; and even though they make no public outcry of a new-found light, they are not to be excluded from that shining company of those who seek to do God's will. Many men do not call themselves converted because the name has become somewhat narrowed, but they know that life holds a new meaning for them and that they are possessed of a power above the sordid things of earth.

It becomes farcical to contend, even as many do to-day, that it matters little what we believe

concerning the deep things of life and experience; still it is not difficult to discern that the old-time stress on creeds and dogmas has been shifted, and the primary question now is not, What do you believe? but, What are you doing to make a better world? Men are coming to the realization that it is not this dogma or that creed that manifests the real nature of religion; but rather it is justice, mercy, humility, and fellowship with Him in whose presence our lives are invested with a haunting and hallowed sublimity. Or, as Phillips Brooks said, standing beside the pillar in Trinity Church: "It is a blessed thing that in all times there have always been men to whom religion has not presented itself as a system of doctrine, but as an elemental life in which the soul of man came into very direct and close communion with the soul of God." The soul of man is greater, far greater, than philosophy; it is deeper and broader than dogma and older than any humanly conceived institution. It is not allegiance to this creed or that dogma that makes a man

godlike in mind and spirit, for one may believe all of these and yet be hard of heart and vile of life. Yet we greatly limit the truth when we say that religion consists in doing spiritual or sacred acts. To all of these must be added a sacred and a spiritual motive—a spirit in which we are to do everything, even the giving of a cup of cold water, remembering that

"Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws
Makes that and th' action fine."

The great truths that make us men must not be mere matters of tradition; rather they must be convictions of faith which each succeeding generation must see and appropriate afresh in its own way. Our creeds may be elaborate in their formal presentations; but if they lack breadth and simplicity and strength, they cannot fathom the inner recesses of the nature of man. When we come into the presence of prophet and saint, strong men who fought so nobly the shallow infidelity and sensuous ceremonialism of their time, our dogmatism and ritualism take to flight, and inwardly we yearn

for "that profounder life of faith and prayer and vision which issues in deeds of daring excellence." In its appeal to the life of the present the Church must ever remember that religious truth cannot be imparted by taking man apart and appealing to a single fragment or faculty of his nature. If religion is to reach and exalt the whole man, it must issue from an entire life and must impress the whole nature of the pupil. It cannot be taught as a mere philosophy, for, as Eckerman, in his "Conversations with Goethe," says: "The Christian religion has naught to do with philosophy. It is a mighty potentiality within itself by which suffering and sunken humanity is raised Godward." Because of its intimate personal quality it must be taught through the power of personality. Its great invitations are invitations to a personal fellowship and not dogmas to be accepted by the mind. Religion is more than knowledge; it is spirit and life.

No appeal could be more tragically pathetic than that, so often invested with ecclesiastical

authority and approbation, which seeks to reach the masses by the adoption of the sensational and showy, the attempt to lift the world by ecclesiastical devices to a position which in the divine will can be attained only by a steady and silent growth continued through many seasons. Pitiful beyond words are the desperate efforts made and methods employed to keep the Church forward—publicity, booster programs, freakish evangelism, and the like—frantic grappling for straws in the wind instead of cleaving to that which is abiding. Some writers see the Church as she walks "in the valley of humiliation" because of the attempt to "make up in organization what is lacking in inspiration" and of the folly of "aping the tactics of the world."

Much is to be said in favor of the modern evangelism; but we can find but little comfort in that which is so startlingly apparent, yielding to the temptation of the melodramatic in order to gain an immediate result. The same temptation that came to Jesus as dazzling dreams

and ambitions passed before his eyes comes to his Church to-day—the temptation to win success through easy and sensational means. It is the temptation that comes alike to statesman, reformer, patriot, and prophet. Such a temptation came to Mahomet to become the wonder, the sensation, the much-talked-about magician. For years he labored in patient and unreserved toil; but he lost his patience, and, assembling the young soldiers, he offered the captain a purse of gold if he would go to a certain village, there assemble the people, and, unsheathing their swords, command all to exclaim: "There is one God, and Mahomet is his prophet." That night the soldiers returned riotously jubilant because they had converted a whole village to Mahomet's faith in a single day. Mahomet was tempted, and Mahomet fell. And so Tolstoy became impatient and was tempted to turn faith into fanaticism. He adopted the showy, the sensational, and sat at the banquet table in his gorgeous palace dressed in the robes of the peasant class, with

bare feet, drinking black soup, while around him sat his family robed in velvet and bedecked with sparkling gems. There is a haste that is waste, and when the Church falls to its allurements it means the de-Christianization of our Christianity. When we commune with the past and learn of those who blazed the way to the things that we cherish most, those star-led followers of the vision, we cannot find where they were ever guilty of "preaching to the times," and many of them were not "popular preachers"; but they had in a rare degree the spiritual quality, and they were ever in quest of a truer faith. Perhaps at times they used means of attracting attention which seem strange to our modern tastes, but they did not prostitute their high purpose to satisfy the fancies of a sensation-loving public. They were not ecclesiastical jugglers who performed curious tricks to win popular applause. They were choice spirits who dared and suffered all for truth and righteousness. Still, in the sense that they ministered to the moral and spiritual

maladies of their age, as did Francis of Assisi and Savonarola, they were "preachers to the times." They kept faith aflame in times darker and more distressing than our own; and when we enter into their secret of strength and victory, they will lead us to the fountain of light and power and joy. If the Church has become uncertain of her faith, no resort to the spectacular can restore the eternal realities. Where that vision fades, men turn away in despair; where it glows, there men turn for hope and life and healing when the cares of the world oppress them.

When one makes a survey of the conditions and problems of to-day, the one fact that stands out with unmistakable boldness is the widespread paralysis or inertness in religious life as it is related to social problems. There are social movements not without a moral purpose, but many of these have no impulse of religious conviction behind them. Never in the history of the world has there been such a magnificent organization of ministry to human

need, but it is quite lacking in the power to supply an inspiration commensurate with the tasks which it confronts. With a philanthropy blighted with the curse of secularism, the re-energizing sense of the eternal has been crowded out by the temporal. Even the Church has been placed in the attitude of exalting sociology to a religion and lacking the power to stir the hearts of men, of adopting the expedient of reaching man through his pocket. An example is to be found in the thesis put forth by the pastor of a famous Church: "Sin is misery; misery is poverty. The antidote of poverty is income." If we accept such an argument, we admit what is manifestly absurd, that the world can be saved from sin and suffering by higher wages or lower prices. Every man wishes to see social conditions made better; but our philanthropy is farcical and fragile without faith, and our noblest endeavor becomes base when unaccompanied by the inspiration and consecration of the eternal. There are industrial and economic developments which need the

direction of higher meanings, which only religion can supply. Why should the Church misemploy her mission when she stands as the chief exponent of the only solution for the problems of life, the religion of Jesus Christ and the interpretation of work and service as the glory of God?

To-day as never before the cry in the Church is for social service. Men are thinking in terms of the masses. It would fill one with amazement to know how many men estimate a movement, not so much by its merits, but by the size of the crowd following it. Theologians are busy trying to divine the attitude of what is vaguely termed the "social mind." Many preachers contend that Jesus emphasized the idea of the kingdom of heaven on earth above the direct personal appeal. To quote a distinguished minister:

The question with the old Puritan was, Is your calling and election sure? Such questions are now held to be selfish, if not morbid, betraying an unworthy desire for personal safety. The Christian of our day, instead of

fleeing from the City of Destruction, like the Bunyan pilgrim, is called upon to help save the city.

The plea to set the social order right and the demand for social justice are magnificent in their purpose; but if the Church is to conserve and deepen this social ardor, we must not forget to emphasize the other side. Humanity is indeed the subject of redemption, but it is to be redeemed one man at a time. Men cannot be made Christians in masses. God does not call men in crowds. The Church must have the social vision, but her appeals must be to the individual. Men are not numbered prisoners marching blindly in the lock step of fate. God's earnest solicitude extends to every soul. While the Church's work is to transform society, she must remember that society is composed of individuals and that the character of society is determined by the character of the individuals composing it. A recent writer in the *Harvard Theological Review* propounded to several leading clergymen of

different denominations a number of questions relating to the Church and the social movement, and these excerpts, taken from the answers, represent in a fair way the attitude of students of the problem:

"I am not so keen for the socialization of the religious appeal as some, feeling that there is an inclination, much to be regretted, to neglect what I believe is the fundamental element, the individual appeal and conduct. It is impossible for a Church to get away from this, and my observation has led me to feel that those Churches or institutions which seem to have dropped this in the interest of the special social message have distinctly weakened their life and influence."

"In my humble judgment, too much emphasis on social service has a tendency to materialize the gospel and lead the Church away from the gospel's power."

"So long as the social message of the gospel is kept tributary to the spiritual and eternal interests of men, it is well and must not be neglected. But if it be given first place and made the real end of the gospel message, it must necessarily give to the minds of men a very inadequate and distorted view of the whole subject. Philanthropy and social betterment are excellent as the outgrowth of

Christianity, but cannot successfully be made substitutes for it. There has never been any real and lasting social betterment in the world except that which was produced by Christianity in the hearts and lives of men. Men must be brought into right relation to God before they can ever be in right relation to their fellow men."

No materialistic humanitarianism parading under the guise of religion is adequate to reach the heart of the individual. No social note can permanently dominate the Church; for the highest motive is personal righteousness, which is the core of the gospel, and upon its acceptation depends a righteous society. In the overemphasis of our relation to man we are in danger of obscuring our relation to God. And in the creation of an imposing superstructure of humanitarian love we are apt to neglect the permanent foundation of Christ's love, which is the only true foundation. Did not Peter begin the work of social betterment by taking the hand of one of the many lame men in Jerusalem? And yet in the beautiful deed at the Beautiful Gate he emphasized the lesson of

Christian individualism. When he opened the door of invitation to the Gentile world, did he not open it to one man, Cornelius? Did not Francis of Assisi become the chief factor in healing a whole race of lepers in Europe because he manifested a supreme example of devotion in embracing one miserable leper? Lord Macaulay said that Wesley saved England from something worse than the French Revolution by carrying the gospel to the colliers of Kingswood and the tinners of Cornwall. This was not accomplished by any hypnotic feat of collectivism, but by an appeal to those restless spirits who would have fomented such a revolution. Let the Church take her place in the vanguard of every movement for civic righteousness, for good government, political integrity, and social welfare; but let her ever remember her mission to the individual and her obligation to society through the regeneration of those who are its components.

If the Church is to continue as an indispensable factor in the lives of men, she must give

something that no other institution can offer. There must be something in her character which the heart can instantly recognize as having come from upper worlds. There must be something in her appeal to deepen the channels of life and quicken its inner springs. It is not enough that men should be incessantly goaded to action when no attention is devoted to the creation of those dispositions out of which fruitful activity proceeds. A starved heart is not satisfied with a Church that has become a clearing house for all kinds of industrial entanglements, doctrinal obscurities, and moral problems. It is well enough for the Church to enlist legislation, employ wealth, and make use of organization in the accomplishment of her rightful purpose; but these forces must be subordinated to the ends of the kingdom of God. It is a small and uninspiring thing to keep a rule that some one else has set before you. We must be animated by the purpose for which the rule was instituted if we are to become active agents rather than passive followers of a sys-

tem. Jesus employed a very different method from the revolutionists. They had begun by attempting to alter material conditions, believing that moral reform would come afterwards. Jesus began with an appeal for a new and better kind of morality, and instead of trying to adhere to certain rules he taught men to pursue certain moral ideals, and thus his gospel met a real hunger which lies deep in the human soul. More than any other teacher he knew what was in man and had no need that any one should tell him. With unerring accuracy the thing he said and the manner in which he said it went home to the heart of his hearer, because he knew its ultimate goal. With a strange power of intuition, he could pass through the external and the tinsel of disguise and see into the very depths of the heart of a man. Though he could talk of the sins of society and the prospects of humanity, he directed his attention to the awakening of truth in the inward parts.

We may convince and persuade men; but

unless the truth gets hold of the conscience and wins men to its intelligent service, they may not remain convinced or persuaded. A man will not sacrifice much for what he holds indifferently; but when the truth takes vital hold upon him, he will maintain it against overwhelming odds. The truth that man holds with tenacity and defends with courage must be rooted in the rational, moral soil of the heart; for, as Pascal said, "The heart has its reasons which the reason knoweth not"—not that the heart has nothing in common with reason, but simply that it has reasons of its own. There is something in the heart of humanity that is deeper than dogma, older than logic, and higher than argument. Newman recognized its truth when, challenged by a skeptic for a debate, he accepted on the condition that his opponent should make all the speeches, and he would only play the violin. He knew that no argument could avail against the soft tones of a violin whose strings become "rainbow bridges whereon the soul might

climb into its native air." Religion strikes a note in human life deeper than life itself, and whoever would enter into its joyous mysteries must bring his heart with him. Longfellow divined the secret in the lines:

> All thought begins in feeling; wide
> In the great mass its base is hid,
> Narrowing up to thought, stands glorified,
> A moveless pyramid.

Since the appeal of religion is to attain to its fruition in the heart of the individual, the Church as the exponent of religious truth must demonstrate that it has a heart for the individual. Nothing can be more destructive to Christian example than the contemptuous attitude of some opinionated religionists toward those who do not happen to share their particular theological conceptions. Forgetting that the gospel is the message of the broad-minded, lofty-spirited, brotherly Son of God, many an orthodox brother thinks that his orthodoxy gives him a right to malign those who differ from him, and in defending the truth he

tramples the new commandment under his feet and breaks the law of love. Often men have argued for their "isms" in waspish words, proving orthodox in doctrine but heterodox of heart. How much better the method of George Frederic Watts, who in his words betrayed his beautiful spirit: "I teach great truths, but I do not dogmatize. I lead men to the church door, and they can go in and see God in their own way"!

There are men to-day in high places who are men of thought rather than men of action; they are men who keep their principles, but sacrifice their work. They speak the truth to themselves and to a circle of congenial souls; but they lose faith in the great masses, and instead of speaking to the people they are content to address the minority who share their doubts and difficulties. They become cynical because they are discouraged by a superficial view of human nature. Jesus Christ was great enough to defy such temptations. Despite the loss of popular support and even abandonment by his

disciples, his faith in men was never beclouded, and he stood calm in the belief of the ultimate triumph of his cause. He saw the good alloyed with the evil, and by nourishing the good he sought to cast out the evil. Recognizing the heart as the strategic point, he worked from within outward and won the hearts of men by love, holy ideals, and lofty aspirations. Though possessed with a divine penetration which enabled him to discover depths of iniquity which no eye but his could see, he cherished the largest hope for humanity and predicted its return to God with a boldness of utterance which even yet seems rash.

No matter how far apart men may be from a theological point of view; still if they love God and seek to serve him as sons, they may be friends and fellow workers. It is not necessary to have uniformity of opinion, but it is necessary that we have a unity of spirit and purpose. The Church needs the true liberalism that is one in the things most worth while and which says: "If thy heart is as my heart, give

me thy hand." John Wesley wrote to the Bishop of Lincoln:

> Alas! my lord, is this any time to persecute a man for the sake of conscience? I beseech you do as you would be done to. You are a man of sense; you are a man of learning; nay, I verily believe, what is of infinitely more value, you are a man of piety. Then think and let think.

We greatly need to-day the wisdom that these words suggest. Many men have honest intellectual difficulty in respect to truths which their hearts long to believe, and because of their perplexity they are being classed in the company of unbelievers. Nearly every man at one time or another passes through a crisis and walks a way that is dim and shadowy. If the Church is to reach men in their confusions and perplexities, as much will depend upon the spirit in which it is presented as the truth that she presents. There is a wise and sweet charity that marks the faith of men; and if men live by a faith other than our own, we may remember, despite the diversity of words and

form, that the human heart is one and that humanity is in quest of the same great end.

"There is no unbelief!
Whoever plants a seed beneath the sod
And waits to see it push away the clod,
He trusts in God!

Whoever sees, 'neath winter's fields of snow,
The silent harvest of the future grow,
God's power must know!

Whoever lies down on his couch to sleep,
Content to lock each sense in slumber deep,
Knows God will keep!

Whoever says, 'To-morrow,' 'The unknown,'
'The future,' trusts the power alone
He dares disown!

The heart that looks on when dear eyelids close,
And dares to live when life has only woes,
God's comfort knows!

There is no unbelief!
And day by day and night, unconsciously,
The heart lives by that faith the lips deny.
God knoweth why!"

Chapter III

WHAT MODERN LIFE DEMANDS OF CHRISTIANITY

DESPITE the assertion, so often made, that modern life is not concerned about the deep things of religion, the fact is that men to-day are as profoundly interested in spiritual truth as ever in the days agone. Whenever we get below the surface scum of life and delve into the inner recesses of the nature of man, we find, as Sabatier remarked, that "man is incurably religious." Wherever there is human life there is religion, and

> "In even savage bosoms
> There are longings, yearnings, strivings,
> For the good they comprehend not."

Man may pull down his barns and build greater; he may diversify his crops, and the yield of his land may increase; but the laws of growth that become a factor in his enrichment remain unchanged. He may increase in knowl-

edge by casting aside old systems and assumptions and by adding new wealth to his store of science, but the laws of thought are not altered. And, too, he may reconstruct his religion, he may disavow his creeds, but the elements of his spiritual nature and the laws by which that nature grows remain unchanged. Religion remains the most intimate and personal of all human concerns, and man can no more elude it than he can escape from his own personality.

Many men to-day, inside the Church and out, are despondent because their highest religious impulse remains unsatisfied. They are longing for an insight into the deeper meanings of life. They are seeking some solution to the dark problems that becloud their vision. They believe in goodness, in virtue, in uprightness, in brotherly kindness, in the brightening of the human lot by the increase of charity and good will; but they are entangled in intellectual bewilderments and are honestly confused as to what they believe about God, Jesus Christ, and the soul. They are not to be classed with the

cynic who sneers at all high things, questions lofty motives, and denies that anything is great and noble. Out of the night that covers them they are yearning for that faith that will enable them to lay hold upon reality, and they are looking to the Church for that expression of Christianity which will satisfy the deeper cravings of their nature.

There is a great deal of mystery about religion in the minds of men to-day, as there has always been. They stand confused in the presence of a philosophy of religion which is often more voluminous than luminous. They are pondering over the meaning of such abstractions as "nature," "redemption," "grace," "regeneration," and the like, which make up our theologies. Somewhat after the manner of algebraic formulæ these scholastic doctrines composed of abstractions are offered to them for the understanding of the Christian way of life. The difficulty is not in the truth of these abstractions, but in their failure to find their way into the realities of life and to meet the

specific needs of a hungry soul. One of the serious obstructions to Christian progress lies in the fact that our technical (and to the average man meaningless) statements of belief so imperfectly represent living issues. Much good work has been done and many useful contributions made, but they are hidden in monographs and beclouded with the mists of creedal concepts. Men are asking for statements which are at once comprehensive and simple, statements which present the essentials of Christianity freed from the encumbrances of technicality. Modern life is demanding a theology for the people whose roots will strike deep into the soil of life and whose message will be clothed in expressions so simple that the layman, as well as the theologian, can understand it.

When the Church returns to simplicity in the expression of the truths of Christianity, she will return to a closer fellowship with Him whose truth sets us free. How strange it is that we seek to embellish the simplicity and

beauty of His truth by the addition of the theories of the dogmatists! Just as well might we attempt to "paint the lily and perfume the rose." Think of how Jesus took the most commonplace things to impress a truth and how he invested the trivial with a new value. A hen and her chicks, a flower of the field, a lost coin became at his touch a parable and a picture of the ways of God. Though he revealed depths which no philosopher could fathom and unfolded problems that were the despair of the wisest rabbi, he set forth the eternal, saving truth in a way so simple that a little child could understand.

One of the evidences of the simplicity of Christ as a religious teacher is the fact that he grounded duty and responsibility in man's moral constitution and separated them entirely from creeds. He emphasized those duties that are found in man's nature and constitution and called men to purity of life because all bore the image of God. If the Church to-day is urging men toward right in conformity to a creed,

she is losing the essential inspiration for the beauty of holiness. In the Middle Ages, when the Crusaders returned from the holy wars, the whole army was laden with spoil. The knights became more concerned about plunder than with the purpose of the crusade; and, fastening pieces of carved furniture to their horses and collecting in spacious sacks all sorts of curious trinkets to carry home, the army became impotent as soldiers and gave the appearance of a band of traveling peddlers. And so when the Church forgets her mission and becomes laden with the rubbish of the scholastics, she loses her power to meet the problems of a restless age. If perfection is what Michelangelo defined it, "the purgation of superfluities," the Church can attain it only as she returns to the simplicity of the truth as Jesus taught it. Lincoln was questioned by a friend as to his Church affiliation. He replied: "I have never joined any Church; but when any Church will inscribe over its altar as its qualification for membership the words of the

Saviour, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and thy neighbor as thyself,' that Church will I join with all my heart and all my soul." His words were not the glib thrust of a critic, but rather the expression of a deep nature who felt that the gem had become obscure in the setting.

If men are asking for simplicity for the understanding of Christian truth, they are nonetheless seeking the spirit of unity in the essential purposes of Christianity. What must be the effect produced on the unchristian mind by the spectacle of approximately one hundred and fifty separate religious bodies in our own country? Many denominational organizations possess substantially the same creed and polity, but they are kept apart by petty strife and prejudice. There have already been a number of amalgamations, and no doubt there will be more; but it is a vain anticipation to expect the fusion of all Churches into one body. Indeed, such a coalition would be altogether undesira-

ble. There was an attempt to make the world of one theology, and a type of unity was preserved for twelve dark centuries, but there has never been anything more direful in its consequences. It is an absurd paradox to say, "No matter what a man believes, so his life is right," for belief creates character. Our different modes of thought and worship meet varied temperaments and needs and are among the living things that shall never die. It is a very simple thing to say, "Let us abolish creeds and get rid of doctrines," but it is not an easy matter to get rid of private judgment. When Arnold of Rugby suggested the union of sects by law, he forgot that our historic fellowships are great communions, "united by powerful sentiments of affection and loyalty and by vital religious ideals embodied in their leaders and imbedded in their institutional life." There are fundamental characteristics which cannot be erased, and it would be a dreary day should all differences be melted into the hotchpotch of concession.

But unity is not uniformity, either of government or of ritual or of polity. There is a comity of sects whose basis is deeper than external vesture. There is no demand for uniformity which is a surface thing; but there is a very deep and far-reaching desire for that unity which is vital and expresses itself in spirit, in fellowship, and in love—such a unity as was in the mind of Christ when he prayed: "That they may be one in us." Because religion is life it takes many forms, and its myriad colors bespeak its vitality and beauty. We may be kept apart by debate and argument and opinions, but still we are partakers of a like hope and faith and vision; and in all there is a unity because we breathe the same aspirations, the same needs, and the same passion for God. And this is the unity that must be written on the heart of every child of God, to be displayed with daring recklessness in an age when many voices proclaim deplorable and diabolical divisions in the Church of Christ, that all men everywhere may see that we are

"One in the freedom of the truth,
One in the joy of paths untrod,
One in the soul's perennial youth,
One in the larger thought of God."

If we are to make Christianity effective, we must know what Christianity is in its essential character. There are many kinds and types of Christianity abroad in the world to-day, because nearly everybody conceives it to be his or her right to define Christianity. As a result we are hearing about "historical Christianity," "theological Christianity," "social Christianity," and "personal Christianity." The world is not lacking in brands of Christianity, but it is growing more and more suspicious of many of them. Modern life is not satisfied with these presentations; it is demanding essential Christianity just as it is demanding essential government, essential education, and essential legislation. If there are many dark problems for which we have found no solutions, the friends of Christianity have a right to find encouragement in the fact that men are seeking

the essential in every realm of life; and essential Christianity is not the "Christianity of history" nor the "Christianity of Creeds"; rather it is the Christianity of Christ expressed in deeds and life. "Back to Christ" is the watchword of modern religious thought, and its meaning is significant in that we find evidences of the fact that nothing but the Christianity of Christ is adequate to meet the needs of the world. Despite the rush and roar of our modern life, in the innermost depths of their being men are longing to get back to Jesus as he really was, as he lived and taught in Judea, believing that the "Man of Galilee" is more real and more to be loved and followed than the Christ of dogma. The pulpit needs to learn that men do not go to Church to indulge in speculative processes or gather figures on economic problems. The life of the average man is one of continuous toil. For six days he breathes the atmosphere of factory, store, or office; and when he enters the sanctuary on the seventh day he longs for a sight of Him who hath

power to lighten our burdens and bring peace to our souls. The story is told of a distinguished minister that early in his ministry he was preaching a message that had very little heart in it. On entering his pulpit one day he found on the Bible a slip of paper on which was written: "Sir, we would see Jesus." The message troubled him very deeply; but it searched his heart, and he realized that Christ was not fundamental in his message. A new note began to sound in his preaching; and it was not long before he found on his pulpit again a little slip of paper, but with these words: "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord." Men are not crying for a new religion or another remedy for the evils of society. They are asking that religion be renewed by the restoration of Jesus Christ to the supreme place in its teachings, that the old faith may have a larger realization and a wider application to these new and changed times.

Should the Church seek to solve the problems and remedy the evils of the day without

the direction of Him who is "the Way," she fails to employ the riches of her divine inheritance; and if the Church is not useful, she is as salt which has lost its savor. There may be many manifestations of human sin; but unless the Church offers in Jesus Christ the only remedy and awakens to the fundamental conviction that Jesus only is the cure for the ills of humanity, she does not follow in the footsteps of her Founder. In the upper part of the picture of "The Transfiguration," by Raphael, is the radiant face of Jesus on the mountain top and the wondering disciples and Moses and Elijah. Down below is the picture of the distracted father, with his demoniac son writhing in anguish, and the helpless disciples who have been left in the valley. The scoffing crowd is adding to the discomfort of the abashed disciples with jeers and taunts in the presence of their failure to administer to the needs of the demoniac. It needs the vision of the mountain top brought down into the valley of human misery. For the disciples could do nothing,

and we can do nothing in the midst of human woe, apart from Jesus.

Nor do we need any theory of Christ, but rather to dispense with all theories and get back to the living Christ, who cannot be encompassed by theories and who towers above all dogma. When Christ is not the central theme and fact in the Church and its message to the world, we need not wonder if we do not find that embodiment of Christly ideals in its membership which is the supreme apologetic of the Church of Christ. The greatest present task of Christian scholarship and of the Church is to find the Christ in Christianity. We need not think that this is a task too vague or indefinite for expression; for whenever and wherever men have been touched by the Spirit of Jesus and lived for purposes that were foremost in his work, then and there it is to be found. If one asks what it is, it is nothing more nor less than the spirit of Jesus enshrined and incarnated in the life of the individual; and this is the spirit that has been the life and

strength of the Church in every age in history.

The objection that most men allege against the ideal of life that Jesus gave to men, whether they admit it or not, is that it is too nebulous and intangible. With the din of the practical ringing in their ears, they decline to evaporate their lives in anything that seems so indefinite and invisible. To them the only rational and effective activities are such as may be expressed in building bridges, surveying land, preparing briefs, and developing mechanical skill. And because of these practical tendencies, the only effective way of presenting the truth of Christianity is to employ the method of Jesus, who embodied the truth by the influence of his life and by his ministry of love and helpfulness. The man of to-day is not seeking a theoretical Christianity veiled in theological abstractions; rather he is seeking a personal expression of Christian ideals in the lives of those who profess to be followers of the Christ. Long ago George Eliot saw that ideas, however real, are

but poor, thin ghosts until they have found expression in a living personality. When we come to think about it, the best part of life cannot be uttered, and we soon become conscious of the limitations of language. Masters of language find that words are inadequate to express the music of the higher universe, the sublime emotions of the soul, and the brightest visions of truth. When we seek for that which touches men most deeply to moral action and excellence, we find it in a personality and not in rules set to words. Behind all his ethical maxims Plato had the ideal of Socrates. Aristotle could not reveal the golden mean without a mythical Wise Man; and when Dante would give expression to that light and loveliness which lies at the heart of life, he embodied it in Beatrice. Persons, not abstractions, civilize and exalt humanity. It was not the theses nailed on the church door at Wittenberg that redeemed Germany; it was Luther's flaming heart. It was not the theory of Puritanism that contributed so much toward the transfor-

mation of England; it was the incarnation of Puritanism in Cromwell and Hampden. It was not the written Declaration of Independence that wrought out our liberty; it was the Declaration of Independence expressed in Washington and Adams and Jefferson. And when we think of the triumphs of Christianity and the measure of its power, we do not think of its creeds, but of the prophets and saints and heroes who embodied its ideals in lives of gentleness and justice, wisdom and courage, sympathy and tenderness, and were followers of Him in whom the Eternal took loving and abiding shape.

Christianity is a great power, but it requires a personality to exhibit that power. The strength of its power and the glory of its ideals are not manifested in theories, in arguments, or in controversies, but in the lives of those in whom its ideals are embodied. It is not by logic or dogma—"truths packed for transportation," as Phillips Brooks used to call them—that the mighty truths of its faith are kept

alive in the world, but by the embodiment of those truths in human form. Argument and controversy are, for the most part, beyond the pale of religion and serve often to demonstrate that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." The faith that wins men to the higher life is "not calculable by algebra, not deducible by logic, but mysterious, effectual, mighty as the hidden process by which the tiny seed is quickened and bursts forth into tall stem and broad leaf and glowing tasseled flower." In one of his sermons at Oxford Newman emphasized the influence of personality as the chief means of bearing spiritual truth to the human soul. And, indeed, there is no other way in which this apparently incommunicable thing called religious faith can be taught. For how can we impart to others that which has meant so much to our own lives without what has been called "the personal equation in faith," "the illative sense"? God works for man with human hands, and he speaks in human tones. As George Eliot said:

"God could not make the violins of Antonio Stradivari without Antonio," and the great truths of religion cannot resolve themselves into character until they become a shining reality in human forms. No other teacher ever held before men such skyey ideals and such eternal truths as Jesus offered to humanity; but these would have been vague and meaningless had not the Word been made flesh and dwelt among men, "full of grace and truth." What we are speaks louder than what we say; and unless religion has become character with us, giving us the victory of moral beauty and spiritual insight, we are simply talkers, and our professions are nothing more than tinseled display, while those who have forgotten self and have become the embodiment alike of human need and divine grace are the real preachers of faith.

In the life of Christ there was an adequate revelation of the character of God, so that the presence and power of the love of God became visible in human history and accessible to per-

sonal experience. Through the revelation in Christ men began to see that God was not some mighty monarch enthroned in the circle of the heavens, nor a harsh despot who had to be cajoled into being kind, but a loving Father who runs to meet the ragged prodigal, "a God whose character is boundless benevolence, worthy of our highest reverence and love, whose mercy is as abundant as the sunlight and as impartial as the air that belts the earth." And in this revelation that Jesus gave to humanity we have the logic of our faith and vision. Here is the whole duty and business of life, a business that is practical enough for all the demands of a practical age. We are "living letters," telling men in the most intimate and personal way the truth as it is in Jesus. The eternal question that every one ought to ask himself is: "How much does the world learn about Christ from my life?" The test of what it is to be a Christian is not what we profess about Jesus, but how far we make him a real Presence to men in the words and acts and spirit of our lives.

If we would be teachers of others, even as Jesus has taught us, it must be through a life which enshrines his spirit in all of the relationships of life. No man knows what he does in this world, but he does most who lives most nobly. Inasmuch as our lives are expressed in acts of service to our fellows, we learn of Him who said that to do His will is to know the truth and to find rest of soul.

The religion of a man consists not so much in his professions, however honest may be his intent, but in what he lives out and acts upon from day to day. Faith that is written in a book or stated in a creed may have its worth and dignity and may make its contribution to that which is ennobling, but it cannot save a man. It has no more value than a beautiful dream until it has actually resolved itself into character and the ideal forces that make character. If that faith is to become a vital power, it must authenticate itself in the moral trial and struggle with the facts and experiences of life. It must be appraised through the moral

process of living and become a fact in the triumph of the loving heart and the ministering spirit. Religion is more than a personal possession of security and peace and joy; it is a service, a sacrifice, a gift to others. Only they are secure who build their house of faith on the rock of reality, and against such the gates of hell can never prevail. Life should ever be a perpetual disclosure of a beautiful soul, remembering

"'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus."

We often talk of the social ills of humanity as if some patent remedy were only awaiting a satisfactory diagnosis, forgetting that the only remedy lies with men who have the social imagination which expresses itself in deeds of sympathy with their fellows—such sympathy as was incarnated in the life of Robert Burns, whom the death of a little bird set musing on the meaning of a world wherein life is woven of beauty, sorrow, and death. Burns had in a rare degree the power to put himself in the

place of another, to see the world from his angle, to feel what he felt. When this power is felt in all its transforming force, every cruelty, every injustice, every despotism will fall, and a new spirit will find its way into the dark places of the world, and light and music will reign where now is enthroned misery and woe. Our lives are worth to our city and nation all the good they do—no more, no less. By as much as we build up by faith and the practice of righteousness, by just so much do we become living stones in a spiritual temple. That man has missed the real aim and end of life who has not made all good things better and all sacred things more sacred. The best way to bring about a needed reform is to rebuke a crass and flaunting evil by incarnating virtue in a life of love and service to mankind. How terrible were the conditions that prevailed when Francis of Assisi lived! It was a time when feudalism in its most iniquitous form reigned; when serfs were subject to some lord and the lord to an overlord, who in turn did

homage to a king. Incessant warfare among petty lords and plunder and pillage were the order of the day. Isolated monasteries filled with droning monks and wrangling theologians exerted a baneful influence upon society. By the establishment of his Third Order, in which were gathered hundreds and thousands of serfs, he sounded the doom of feudalism and overthrew a political theory on which the whole fabric of European statecraft was builded. He became the chief factor in helping to stamp out a frightful plague. In the most horribly repulsive leper, ragged and rotting, Francis saw Christ and kissed him. No doubt to many in this age of sanitation such forgetting of self would seem the very expression of folly, yet what divine beauty shone through it all! Needless to say, his kiss did not heal that particular leper, but it displayed that supreme example of devotion which was needed to arouse men to deal with that plague. In an age of brutal violence and vulgar luxury, when there was no sympathy in society, the spirit of

Christ came to the surface and took lovely form in "the poor little man of Assisi," who by his artless love moved men to pity and gentleness. He was no agitator wearing the robe of religion. He simply taught the love of God and lived it, the supreme ambition of his life being so to live the life of his Master as to know him in the fellowship of his sufferings. If the Church has lost any of its power in our day and is trying to bring about reform through organization and agitation, it is because she has lost the strength of a faith that dares to follow Christ, even as St. Francis followed him.

So to live that men will see in our lives the image of Christ, so to decorate the house of man with the picture of Jesus as the artists of old adorned the cathedrals—surely no life is half so worth the living. This is what Tolstoy saw in Lincoln when he said that he was "a Christ in miniature." This it is that St. Gaudens saw in Phillips Brooks when he made the memorial of the preacher, with Christ

standing close beside him, one hand resting gently on his shoulder. Burnett said of Archbishop Leighton that he had known him for twenty years, and in all that time he had never known him to say anything or do anything which he would not have wished to be his last word or act. He lived every day as in the very presence of his Master.

What far-reaching opportunities for service are to be found to-day both in the habitations of fame and in the haunts of the lowly! There is a whole world of heartache about us, and we are too little aware of its presence. Often a tap on the shoulder, a kindly word, a hearty handclasp will mean more than the proffer of a purse. One of the officers of Wellington was commanded to do a difficult and dangerous duty, and for a moment he lingered as if afraid. Then he said to the great general: "Let me have a clasp of your hand before I go, and I can do it." A simple act of kindness will often brace a man against the temptation at hand and will help him over the perilous

places. What nobler purpose can there be in life than that of helping to lift men into the presence of their better selves and of being

> "To other souls
> A cup of strength in some great agony,
> Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
> Be the sweet presence of a good diffuse
> And in diffusion ever more intense"?

Such a purpose is not to be measured by the ordinary standards of living, much less amenable to secular judgments. It does not rise and fall with the variations of earthly fortune as the quicksilver in the glass responds to the weather. It is delightfully unconscious of the whisperings of self. In that beautiful poem entitled "Inasmuch," Markham has pictured a watchman named Ivan guarding the heights of the citadel of Moscow. It was a bitter winter night, and the driving snow was adding to its pangs, when a half-clad beggar came stumbling by. Ivan threw his own coat, his only protection from the biting cold, around the unfortunate, and the next morning he himself was found frozen in death—

But waking in that better land that lies
Beyond the reaches of these cooping skies,
Behold the Lord came out to greet him home,
Wearing the coat he gave at Moscow's dome.

"Where, dear Lord, found you this coat of mine,
A thing unfit for glory such as thine?"
Then the Lord answered with a look of light:
"This coat, my son, you gave to me last night!"

When the friends of Samuel Bowles remonstrated with him and urged him to lay down his work, the great man replied: "I have the lines drawn and the current flowing, and by throwing my weight here now I can count for something. If I made a long break to get strong, I should lose my opportunity. No man is living a life worth living unless he is willing, if need be, to die for somebody or something." There are three great monuments to Chinese Gordon; but the other two, as noble as they are, do not portray the real Gordon as does the monument in the city of Khartoum. It is a life figure of Gordon seated on a dromedary; and in this statue the face of Gordon is not

turned toward that region through which he might have escaped, but it is turned toward the great desert whose voice he heard. As Dr. Speer has most strikingly put it: "Rising from those black throats there in the Soudan, Chinese Gordon heard the voice of Jesus calling. He will stand at last among those who in giving water to the thirsty gave drink to Christ, in giving to the hungry gave bread to Christ, in grasping the great unselfish opportunities of his life served Jesus Christ his Lord." All true living is a dying, a passing out of one's life into the lives of others.

The world is longing for a sight of him made manifest in human lives. Truth will not hang her pictures in a cold gray light; but when Christ becomes the supreme reality in all the relationships of those who call upon his name, then will weary souls everywhere turn to him for rest. Why are we so slow in learning this high art of living? It is said that Tolstoy was being shown a painting of the "Last Supper" by the artist who had painted the

scene. After studying it for a while, he turned to the artist and, pointing to the central character in the group, Tolstoy remarked: "You do not love that one." The artist was greatly surprised, as if his friend had missed the real theme of the picture, and in astonishment he replied: "That's the main character; that represents the Christ." "Yes, I know," said Tolstoy; "but had you loved him more, you would have painted him better." This is where so many of us fail in portraying Christ to a world that has never needed him more than to-day. Let us make the simple and lofty prayer of Ruskin our own:

> Most sincerely
> Let me follow where Thou leadest,
> Let me, bleeding where Thou bleedest,
> Die, if dying I may give
> Life to one who asks to live,
> And more nearly,
> Living thus, resemble Thee.

Chapter IV

THE CONQUERING VISION

IN the inventory of the moral order, which it is the privilege of every man to estimate, there are two distinct views. The one is held by the representatives of a daring optimism, often more facile than daring, who affirm in the face of all the dark tragedies about us that all is well with the world. The other view is that which finds its supporters among those who take heavy toll of the dark facts of life and feel that there can be no hopeful end to a chaotic world. There are some who contend that the age has lost its faith, a saying which is uttered by some who fear it is true and echoed by others who wish it to be true. But, happily, during these times, when many are fearful that the Christian faith is fading, there are still those who take fresh courage and can say, as did Browning: "I still, for my part, see reasons and reasons." At a

time when many doubted, Browning championed the Christian faith because it dared face the most melancholy facts of existence, and that without fear or flattery. There is a view which is far more satisfying and more reasonable than any extreme; and that is that nobler vision which, forgetting no dark fact, sees through the shadow into the destiny of things and dares to feel that in the divine providence every tangle will ultimately be untangled.

Ours is an age of transition, and for that reason it is an age of questioning and doubt. But to one whose eye is not holden, the manifold plans that are under way for the welfare of humanity attest that our age has not lost its faith, but rather is eager for new institutions, and its temper of mind is constructive. The great forces that are molding the world to-day are not the noisy and turbulent forces, but the inconspicuous and unobserved forces. Very little thought about history shows us the fallacy of our ordinary thinking and proves

that the silent activities are the forces that dominate and give shape to human history. If we fail to take into account the silent influences that are transforming the world, it is because we have become leaden in our spirits. No man is degraded in his powers of perception who is not first degraded in his taste. All events are seen in various measures by various men. "Ye have seen what ye have seen," is King Arthur's language to the knights. Our perceptions take the color of our character. When we contemplate the movement of the spiritual forces in the world, we must listen with sympathetic ears. Or, as Réville puts it: "We must have the religious ear in order competently to study phenomena of the religious order. How could the man who has no sense of the beautiful ever write the history of art?" No true pictures of faith are to be found in the gallery of reason. They are reserved for those sympathetic souls who see them in their truth and splendor and have become thinkers of the same quality. When Wesley began to melt the cold formalism

of his day with the fires of a flaming evangel, religion seemed dying or dead. The churches were empty, neglected, and falling into disrepair. Men laughed at the very mention of the name religion, and godly men openly despaired. Bishop Butler, the greatest thinker of his day, sat oppressed in his castle, with not a hope surviving. Breathing upon the fiery evils of his time the breath of purification, Wesley drew the masses around him, and by carrying the gospel to the tinners in Cornwall and the colliers of Kingswood he saved England from something like a French Revolution. But Bishop Butler and many others were blind to the extraordinary visitation and work of God that was apparent almost within earshot of his castle. To-day in the moral and spiritual realm far-reaching consequences are in the making, but many are too blind to perceive them. When Pythagoras taught the doctrine that the heavenly bodies make music as they wheel in the firmament, he was asked why we never hear "the music of the spheres." He

replied that we are not still long enough to hear it. So in the rush and roar of our modern life, with the din and hum and hurry of the world, we are not able to hear the still, sweet music of the higher realms.

Added to the cloud which befalls an age when some of the forms of religious faith are changing is the gloom of man's inhumanity to man, with its trail of blood and fire and tears. So many things are unsettled that it often seems as if nothing were indubitable and firm. Tragedy attends all progress; but it does not spell the defeat of the good, for only in tragedy does man learn the highest truths. Every important epoch in the life of humanity illustrates in a special manner this law of life. In the Reformation, when old traditions were superseded and vain superstitions were swept away, no essential truth was destroyed, nor was any vital element of the Christian faith discredited. Faith abides and grows through changing forms; and if we once realize that it is only the form and not the essence that is

changing, the scene is less dark. Even the "Reign of Terror," whose horrors were carried to the most terrible excesses, proves that God can work through the earthquake and the fire. Our ideals have been wrong, and with all the woe and suffering there will come to us the high truth that our real progress depends on our genuine love of God and our fellow man. The proof of the divinity and absoluteness of our religion is its capacity of constantly renewing its fires of love and enthusiasm at the cross. There are deep signs that show that men are thinking of things long forgotten and that out of the weltering chaos of world tragedy there will come a renewal of faith in the truths that make us men.

Whatever may be the difficulties, the man of faith has a right to believe and trust, even where he cannot prove. How seemingly impossible were the outward circumstances with which Christ had to contend! How far off seemed the realization of his beautiful dream of a Christian Church, of the fine type of char-

acter it was to beget, of the victories that it was to win in the world! What material in which to implant the sublimest conceptions that ever broke on the soul of man—a handful of clod-born men out of a little, obscure province of the Roman Empire! Jesus Christ held no thought of wavering in his purpose. He had dreamed his dream of a new and a beautiful civilization whose conquest should be accomplished without sword or trumpet. His death was the dark tragedy of love crucified by hate, but his tomb has become a throne from which he rules men by a living Presence; and to-day those who follow him are aware of the fellowship of One whom they know to be the Eternal Christ. And we are neither like Christ nor our true selves if, standing face to face with what so often seems defeat and failure, we are ready to capitulate to the forces of evil.

Whatever criticisms may be lodged against the Church in our day, it is to the glory of the Church and present ideals that there is a sense of unattainment and that with all of her

achievements the Church of Christ has not measured the heights of perfection. Life would be dismal indeed if we had reached the limit of its ideals on any of its broad lines, if there were no greater verities than we have compassed or can soon compass, if duty and truth and life were all held within our slender grasp. There are great religions that separate themselves from one another at this point. Confucianism boasts that it places before men the practicable things, that its ideals are human attainments, and that it has been free from the stupendous blunder of setting before men those goals that are impracticable. Christianity, on the other hand, has attested the sublimity of its character, not by challenging us to that which can be easily and readily done, but by pointing us to those dreams and aspirations that some day we may hope to attain. When we climb to the steep hills that rise before us, it is only to realize that there are yet higher heights and that beyond the next range there is another and another. The tragedy of Andrea del Sarto, as

Browning tells it, was that he was "the faultless painter," who had no need for rough sketches, but was able at once to put his dream into color. His ideal was too low, else he would not have reached it.

> "Man's reach must exceed his grasp,
> Or what's heaven for?"

While the Church may be conscious of great achievements, it is her glory that she has never been satisfied, as was Thorwaldsen when he unveiled his statue of Christ, but that the ideal has been kept aglow within that pointed to higher ends. The fact that the Church has accomplished great things and won splendid victories has given to her the power of conceiving of still more glorious victories. There is no glory that belongs to the Church in not having attained, but there is real glory in the consciousness of unattainment and of the better things that are in store for her. Still this sense of unattainment is necessary to preserve the high ideals that Jesus Christ has set for us, for there is no hope for the individual or

the institution whose aspirations have sunk to the level of the commonplace; and, after all, this same sense of unattainment may possess within itself just that element which the Church must possess to center her life on God. Where there is a realization of incompleteness and failure there is to be found that instinctive turning to him in whom is fullness of life. Where there is a facing of the limitations of life there is that awakening to strength which it is necessary to overcome. Let the critics flay the Church, for therein they confess the high ideals that she is capable of realizing. It proves beyond question that there is the light of a new conscience playing remorselessly over the religious order of our day. It is the light of God that will lead to the realization of the dreams we all have dreamed, the very sense of unattainment being its guarantee and its prophecy.

Much of the present-day discouragement in the religious realm is due to the fact that we fail to remember that we are dealing with time-

less tasks and that the results are to be weighed in the scale of eternity. Looking only at immediate results, we do not foresee the far-reaching consequences which will fall on those who follow. Science assures us that growth is the very genius of the universe; and if our human advance seems slow when measured by the day, it is rapid when estimated in the light of the ages. When we glance down the dusty way of history, we see how far and how fast we have come and how we have been guided through the years; and unless we be blind, we cannot fail to see the wonders that attend our progress. Things are moving, but we want them to fly. As Theodore Parker said: "The trouble is that God is not in a hurry, and I am." The loitering progress of humanity toward the ideal tries our faith, moving forward with slow and leaden feet, stumbling and groping all the while, and we become impatient and too frequently mar our usefulness by trying to outrun the Almighty. The greatest blessings that we enjoy to-day, the high truths of faith,

liberty, fraternity, and equality, were born out of long years of agitation and the harsh appeal of war, with its entail of blood and tears. Often the seed of some greater, nobler faith is dropped by some prophetic hand, only to lie fruitless for years. Then comes an age of doubt, with its denials, and every flower of faith seems to wither; but out of the clouds there comes at last a yet nobler faith, with larger realizations and higher aspirations. All through the ages the sowers of the seeds of light have realized meager harvests; for, though they labored diligently, most of the seed fell on stony ground, only to wither and die; and even to-day, after ages of time, if the harvest of the highest things is not what the sower prays to see, we may remember, as Aristotle said long ago, that we live in a realm of ends, and the nature of a thing is known by its final results, even as a tree is known by its fruits.

Tedious, indeed, was the method which Jesus employed in dealing with the problems of

the days of his flesh. The social order was iniquitous; the political order was corrupt; the economic system worked injustice and oppression. He foretold their destruction and overthrow by writing his name on the hearts of a few peasants. Though the nations lay moaning in darkness, he steadfastly devoted himself to the transforming of twelve men. When he hung dying upon the cross, his life's work seemed a failure, for Judea was as sordid and Galilee as worldly-minded as when he preached his first sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth; but here and there a human heart had caught his vision, and through these and their successors there was to be established a new world order. When we look into the life of the apostle of the Gentiles, we can see, though buffeted by ill health and pursued by pitiless foes, how he carried upon his heart the care of a great cause. The Churches were often infested with error and feud and even questioned his authority; but sound and noble was his patience, and his reproofs were like the strokes

of a discriminating surgeon. Wise is the preacher who in this day takes counsel from him who had learned the strength and patience of wisdom. We do well to remember that nothing in the universe of God takes place by chance. We all labor under a God of law, and the same obedience and industry that produces the harvest of grain will no less certainly secure the fruits of the Spirit. It matters not how industrious and ingenious the workmen, all are compelled to wait patiently the completion of a development which human ingenuity cannot hasten. There is no short or easy way of redeeming the world. It can be accomplished only through the slow growth in the hearts of men of that love, wise and tender, which shone upon us in the life of Jesus and speaks to us through his words. Seemingly futile are the efforts of the parent to impress upon the young life the words of truth that found expression in the life of Jesus. Flippant and heedless appears youth, untouched by the appeals of love; but in every heart is a cave of

memory which gives back an echo. Beautifully expressive is the figure that pictures the soul of man as peopled "like a silent city, with a sleeping company of memories, associations, and impressions that may be wakened into activity at the slightest sound." No deep truth is ever really forgotten, no tender word ever lost. Somehow the angel of memory brings them back to haunt and to bless. It was the figure of an old man, gray with grief and weary with sorrow, seen in the soft light of memory, that brought the prodigal home. No good thing is ever lost, nothing is wasted in the economy of God. Every act done at the call of his will is a seed sown; and while we may never see its fruits, it will grow, sometimes sooner, sometimes later, and the harvest will be an eternal harvest.

Jesus spoke of the coming of his kingdom as if it must needs be unfolded through long and gradual processes, like the working of the leaven and the growth of the seed, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the

ear." The ultimate goal may be far remote; but as the ages go by the world grows purer in its life, wider in its sympathies, and higher in its ideals.

"The eternal step of progress beats
To that great anthem, calm and slow,
Which God repeats.
God works in all things; all obey
His first propulsion from the night.
Wake thou and watch! The world is gray
With morning light!"

Despite raging conflicts, there is a growing spirit of pity and justice among men which is none else than the coming spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of love and good will to men. The earth is not to be the theater of divine disappointment. Architecture went slowly from the cave to the cathedral, art from the daub to the masterpiece, and liberty from Hercules to Washington; and though the movement was slow, the progress was sure and unceasing. And to-day, however dark may be the clouds that hang over the world, however crafty may be the enemies that contend against

the Church, our failures will turn to success and our defeat to that victory which will usher in that eternal and everlasting kingdom that shall never be moved.

Cynics and unbelievers are throwing out the taunting question: "Where is the fulfillment of the promise of the coming of Christ in the life and spirit of the world?" But just so long as the Church can point to the transformation of a single life, she proves that Jesus is a living and a present power in the lives of men. Angry and murderous mobs threatened the early apostles at Jerusalem; but so long as they were able to point to one man and say, "By faith in his name hath his name made this man strong, whom ye behold and know," they faced all terrors with undaunted courage. Men may hold varying notions as to the nature of Christ, but all must agree that he is the supreme teacher of religious truth in the world to-day; and even in this far-off land and age those who come in contact with him find that the stain of their sin is taken away, and the beauty of their

sorrow is revealed. Though Jesus spoke as never man spake, it is not his words that make him the great Awakener of sleeping souls, but rather the fact that he is a living and abiding Presence. This is the ubiquitous fact that confronts the man who attempts to discount the efficacy of Christianity as a world influence. A peasant carpenter out of the humble environment of his quiet home at Nazareth, facing the hard, practical view of the Sadducees and the bigoted Pharisees, and witnessing a world that was a mass of corruption and festering sores! A time when the intellect was darkened, when luxury had ripened into rot, when worship was divorced from life! Yet he walked as a man among men, deepening his sympathies through contact with suffering, and at last suffered a death which was the inevitable result of a clash of two great ideals. But he is not "the pale Galilean who sleeps beneath the Syrian stars," but the ever-present Christ who dwells in the hearts of men to-day as truly as he lived in Judea and Galilee in the days

agone and who can say what no man can deny: "I and the Father are one." Though twenty centuries have passed, men do not think of him as dead nor yet as belonging to a time long gone by. He is not detained in the outer porch of the human soul; he enters as a dear, familiar Friend into its most hidden and sacred chambers. Through all the ages he has been the eternal contemporary of all that is high and noble in the life of mankind. No other torch-bearer or teacher of men has so influenced the tangled, turbulent life of the world as has the Prophet of Nazareth. So he is with us—a great compassion slowly softening an immemorial hardness of heart, a deep and tender justice that is one with love, and a hope for the race that knows no defeat. As the mind of the race becomes a more perfect medium of his life and spirit, by so much does the race move forward and upward.

Only in this truth can we ever hope to fathom the unfathomable depths of faith. Think of what it means to the life of man as it lights

up the dark universe like a sunrise, as it brings meaning out of mystery, and puts the substance of eternal reality beneath the great idealisms of humanity. This sense of the abiding presence of Christ is what gives validity to the daring heroisms of humanity and makes a man willing to suffer for the right and to die for the truth. Not otherwise could man show himself capable of enduring want, loneliness, despair, and death itself for an ideal. In every age and land there have been those who have heard his voice and held his hand as they journeyed with him along the way. And these have shown, as did St. Francis and Wesley and Brooks, an atmosphere of thought and quality of life like his own. More than an influence, more than a haunting memory, he is a living Presence beckoning us to that which is eternal. Hear the words of Santa Teresa:

I was in prayer one day when I saw Christ close by me, or, to speak more correctly, felt him; for I saw nothing with the eyes of the body, nothing with the eyes of the soul. He seemed to me to be close beside me; and I saw,

too, that it was he who was speaking to me. I was extremely afraid at first and did nothing but weep. However, when he spoke to me but one word to reassure me, I recovered myself and was, as usual, calm and comforted, without any fear whatever. Jesus Christ seemed to be by my side continually; and as the vision was not imaginary, I saw no form. But I had a most distinct feeling that he was always on my right hand, a witness of all I did; and never at any time, if I was but slightly recollected, could I be ignorant of his near presence.

Can it be possible that Christ is in the midst of those warring hosts along the far-flung battle lines? Has he a dwelling place in the "pillar of cloud by day and fire by night" which hangs over the warring nations? Who has not felt a strange charm at the story, so frequently told, of the "Comrade in White," who is reported to have been seen on the fields of Nancy, in the Argonne, at Soissons, and Ypres, walking through the trenches and bending over those who lay wounded? Snipers sniped at him, and shells fell all around, but nothing had power to touch this mysterious figure. One of the soldiers gave this account of his presence:

It was the next day. At noon we got word to take the trenches in front of us. They were two hundred yards away, and we weren't well started till we knew that the big guns had failed in their work of preparation. We had advanced one hundred and fifty yards when we found it was no good. Our captain called to us to take cover, and just then I was shot through both legs.

I fell into a hole of some sort. I suppose I fainted, for when I opened my eyes I was all alone. The pain was horrible; but I didn't dare to move lest the Germans should see me, for they were only fifty yards away, and I did not expect mercy. I was glad when the twilight came. There were men in my own company who would run any risk in the darkness if they thought a comrade was still alive.

The night fell; and soon I heard a step, not stealthy, as I expected, but quiet and firm, as if neither darkness nor death could check those untroubled feet. So little did I guess what was coming that, even when I saw the gleam of white in the darkness, I thought it was a peasant in a white smock or perhaps a woman deranged. Suddenly I guessed that it was the "Comrade in White."

At that very moment the German rifles began to shoot. The bullets could scarcely miss such a target, for he flung out his arms as though in entreaty and then drew them back

till he stood like one of those wayside crosses that we saw so often as we marched through France. And he spoke. The words sounded familiar; but all I remember was the beginning, "If thou hadst known," and the ending, "But now they are hid from thine eyes." And then he stooped and gathered me into his arms —me, the biggest man in the regiment—and carried me as if I had been a child.

I must have fainted again; for I awoke to consciousness in a little cave by a stream, and the "Comrade in White" was washing my wounds and binding them up. I wanted to know what I could do for my friend to help him or to serve him. He was looking toward the stream, and his hands were clasped in prayer; and then I saw that he, too, had been wounded. I could see, as it were, a shot wound in his hand, and as he prayed a drop of blood fell to the ground. I cried out. I could not help it, for that wound of his seemed to be a more awful thing than any that bitter war had shown me. "You are wounded, too!" I said. Perhaps he heard me, perhaps it was the look on my face; but he answered gently: "This is an old wound, but it has troubled me of late." And then I noticed sorrowfully that the same cruel mark was on his feet. You will wonder that I did not know sooner. I wonder myself. But it was only when I saw his feet that I knew him.

No doubt to many this will seem only the incredible fancy of a dreamer in the throes of agony. Still we may remember the words of Hamlet to Horatio: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy." Jesus is on the battle field as he is everywhere; not in the sins of men, but in what they sin against, the ideal which is betrayed by the curse of war. A German religious paper published these words:

Jesus is amidst those who know him even on the battle field and teaches his disciples ever again and again to turn in confidence to him who is their Father, whose voice is heard in the thunder of the cannon and the dreadful scenes of conflict. What is more wonderful than all, he does not remain at our battle front or in our hospitals; he passes over to our enemies and there also seeks his own. He does not betray us, but he tells us that he knows others on the other side of this conflict whom he loves and who need him. Before we ourselves come to appreciate it he is binding us and them together in bands of mutual respect, of mutual helpfulness among the wounded, and of faith in the coming of a better day of peace.

Thrilling beyond words is the story of how on Christmas Eve the English soldiers in the trenches began to sing "Christians, Awake!" and the Christians did awake, both English and German. The Germans came out of their trenches bearing a little Christmas tree lighted with candles, and the English ran to meet them. As they sat there under the Christmas stars they forgot the things that made them enemies, and war seemed an unnatural thing. What else other than the Spirit of the ever-present Christ could capture two hostile armies and make men feel that they were brothers? The divine love underlies all the horror and hatred of war and is continually affording new evidences of its presence and power. War is not the inevitable condition of humanity. Neither are the nations who exalt war the test of Christianity. Rather Christianity is the test of nations, and by its principles they stand condemned as unchristian.

In all of the journeyings of life there goes with us a majestic Presence who is ever ready

to lighten our burdens and heal our infirmities and bring peace to our troubled spirits. Christ knows no alien races, no outcast men or fallen women. He gathers all into the embrace of his heart. He does not divide men into failures and successes. All men are the subjects of his redeeming love. He goes about with bare feet and locks wet with the dew of the morning upon his mission of recovery and restoration. He climbs the reeking steps of the tenements and makes his way to the jails, bringing his message of cheer to all who are discouraged. Not all men have understood him equally, nor have they always been true to what they have understood. Ofttimes his gospel has had to fight its way into an alien and unsympathetic environment, still from varied surroundings—national, intellectual, and ethical—his disciples have avowed their allegiance; and to-day, in the light of the refining processes of the centuries, all men must confess: "O Galilean, thou hast conquered!"

Christ's conquest of the world is being man-

ifested in all of the relations of men. While we may never again see the like of the demonstrative forms of the old evangelism, still we are in the midst of a social, commercial, and political revival which reflects the presence of Christ among men as vividly as he presented himself in times past. To-day men are feeling as never before that such evils as poverty, disease, crime, and war need not be, and they are beginning to drive the piles for a new and better order of society. A new humanism is being born in the world, the tone of our social life is being purified, and the ills of society which were overlooked in the past are rising up before us in all their horror. Men of big business are accepting the principles of Jesus as they are related to property and wealth and industry, and the Christ spirit is being enthroned in the marts of trade. The realm of barter is yielding to the impress of his ideal. When business men meet under the motto, "He profits most who serves best," it is certainly prophetic of a better day. Ours is a

day when corporations are demonstrating that they are possessed of souls and that they are learning to think of business as a vast system of human service. When we hear men say that brotherhood is good business, that the making of money is not the largest part of it, that righteousness is the finest common sense, we realize that a commercial revolution is under way. Men with visions of bigger things than business are becoming more plentiful even where big financial interests might easily obscure them. Through years of discouragement reformers have been sowing the seed of a new spirit in commerce; and they have a right to become riotously optimistic when the president of a great corporation confesses: "To make money is a good thing, but it is a far better thing to be able to create opportunities for other men to work out their own salvation in life with happiness and contentment."

The world of politics is yielding to the impress of the ideals of Jesus. Men are begin-

ning to have a different conception of the meaning of politics. They are thinking about it, as did Aristotle, as "the science of building men, spreading manhood, and increasing States." They are grasping the truth of what Edmund Burke meant when he said: "The foundation of politics is like the foundation of society—true religion." This nobler conception is permeating the minds of men as never before in the history of the nations. There is a striking contrast between the old standards and the new. Sentiments are being strengthened and atmospheres created in which the bosses will meet political death by asphyxiation. The leader who stands for graft can already see the handwriting on the wall and hear the cries of condemnation. The leader of tomorrow will be chosen because of high principle and unsullied patriotism. The statesman of the future will be the man who can translate into terms of law and life the highest ideals of Christianity. As a great political economist remarked: "All political economy is be-

ing rewritten under the influence of Jesus Christ."

A world patriotism is dawning which realizes that no nation can live to itself without regard for the happiness and usefulness of other nations. Commercial relations and national interdependence have hitherto proved inadequate to prevent strife; and nations are seeking a new basis on which to establish international relations, and that basis will be the brotherhood of man. When President Wilson appeared before Congress in behalf of world peace, it was as if he had breathed into international affairs the breath of life. It prophesied the elevation of humanity to a higher plane and the defeat of hate and war and strife. It afforded a glimpse into that new order when the strong nation, instead of oppressing the weak nation, will stretch forth its scepter to aid and protect the helpless. It proclaimed anew the truth that righteousness is related to the life of the State as well as to the life of the individual. Some declared it a beautiful ideal;

but we may remember that the ideal is the principle of progress, and in it lies the promise of a happier future. Without the dreams of those who have coveted for humanity a higher goal, men would still be living in caverns, naked and miserable. Because Christ lived, oppression is doomed; and men are already planning for nations and democracies builded on righteousness, where there will be no supremacy and no servitude, and where the might of all will defend the right of each. Some mystic leaven and secret energy is finding its way into every race and clime, and the best in human nature has declared itself at eternal war with the ideals of Nietzsche or a Treitschke, because it realizes that materialism in philosophy leads inevitably to a worship of force. The nobler patriotism is glowing with new warmth and faith and fervor and is destined to be "the political religion" of the world. A new democracy is dawning, in the preparation of which men are awakening to the realization that human life is sacred; and "to make

the earth valuable we must first make men valuable." In that new democracy material forces will yield to the spiritual, and men will be developed who are great of heart and efficient in the service of their fellows.

Meanwhile notes of discontent are all about us. Many are baffled and ready to give up the struggle. There is a struggling section weighted with grief and disappointment, dwelling under a cloud. All things are not marching to the defeat of evil, as they had expected. Many things that have been dear to them are passing away. Still the literature of hope is very rich. In other times vested interests have been assailed, old traditions superseded, and vain superstitions swept away; but no vital element of Christianity has ever been discredited. Faith abides and grows through changing forms. Amidst the perplexities and discouragements that attend a time of transition, we need the vision of the Christ as he is at work through the instrumentality of the universal Church. In the strife with principali-

ties, powers, and the hosts of wickedness we need to lift up our eyes and behold the holy, apostolic, universal Church. Christ has promised ultimate and triumphant victory to his Church. The hope of the world lies in organized religion, because the Church is an essential constituent of religious truth. Civilization is dependent on the character of the Church: for when the Church languishes, society degenerates; and when the Church is vigorous and spiritual, society is brought to a higher plane. Through the agency of the Church true religion is destined to advance to higher forms and bloom into a new loveliness and attain to its ultimate glory.

They reason in vain who contend that the days of Christianity are numbered, that her eyes are growing dim, that her natural strength is abated, who do not see that she holds within her bosom elements which are indestructible. Christianity is possessed of the power of triumph in her capacity of adjusting herself to the shifting conditions of the world. Not so

with many forms of religious expression. Gone "the Greco-Roman, Germanic, and Scandinavian mythologies; the Semitic polytheisms of Nineveh, Babylon, Biblos, Tyre, and Carthage; the rich pantheon of ancient Egypt; the solar worship of the Incas—all these are dead and gone forever." But Christianity, though threatened with death, passes into the cloud and is transfigured, emerging with new energies. Christianity as the complete expression of true religion is destined to project her beneficent ministry into succeeding ages, because she possesses those fundamental and eternal principles which survive change and alteration and whose verities shine with increasing brightness wherever men dwell.

If we ask what ideal will ultimately prevail over all others, we will find that victory belongs to the ideal set up by Christ. The German poet Heine had a dream in which he saw the gods gathered at their banquet tables, on which were placed goblets of heavenly wine. They laughed and drank and lived at ease till

the door was flung open, and there came tottering in a pale-faced figure, like unto the Son of man, bearing the weight of a large cross, which he flung down upon the table. The faces of the gods turned pale, and slowly one by one they slunk away. The dream recognized an ideal of life higher than strength or wisdom or joy. And before the majesty of this ideal all must inevitably bow. The height or depth of any civilization is to be measured by the life and spirit of Him who was despised and rejected of men. He is the standard of our social order. Dr. Holmes was asked if he did not think that Christianity had proven a failure. "I rather think," he answered, "that it has never been tried." There are tremendous potencies of regeneration in the unrest of our modern world, and behind the operation of irresistible forces the truth of Jesus is moving to fulfillment. Every nation which has rejected his law of life has fallen to its ruin. The ashes of old empires, blown into our faces by the winds of time, warn us by their desolation

that only that nation can stand which rests upon the truth as it is in Jesus. His rule of life is not the idle dream of a wandering idealist. It is the only possible basis for an enduring social, political, and economic life. Other foundation there is none, and there never will be while the world stands.

The times in which we live demand a living faith and a conquering vision to triumph over error. No matter how dark or forbidding the evils that encompass us, we may remember that we live in a world in which man is free to lay hold on God, and out of disappointment and grief he will ultimately bring triumph and consolation. The leaders of the race have been those who have achieved greatness of life and sublimity of faith through the mastery of what seemed an unconquerable fate. Doubt is too easy and cynicism too shallow. Anybody can deny, but it takes a brave spirit to fling fear to the winds and capture the prize of faith. We are neither like Christ nor our better selves if our spirits faint in the hour of conflict. There

is an omnipotent God behind the shadow of the world.

"Beyond the stars
Is a love that is better than fate."

And through the power of that love we may defy the throned tyrannies of the world and gain the one victory that is worth the winning.

"Lord Christ, if thou art with us and these eyes
Are holden, while we go sadly and say,
'We hoped it had been he, and now to-day
Is the third day, and hope within us dies,'
Bear with us, O our Master. Thou art wise
And knoweth our foolishness. We do not pray:
'Declare thyself, since weary grows the way,
And faith's new burden hard upon us lies.'
Nay, choose thy time; but ah! whoe'er thou art,
Leave us not. Where have we heard any voice
Like thine? Our hearts burn in us as we go.
Stay with us; break our bread: so, for our part,
Ere darkness falls haply we may rejoice,
Haply when day has been far spent may know."

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